

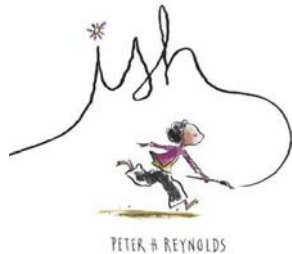


ready 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne soldiers to quell the violence. I endured a year of school days filled with events unlike any others in the history of the United States.” These first words of Melba Pattillo Beals’ memoir *Warriors Don’t Cry* are only a snapshot of the events that happen to her inside the walls of Central High School. Drawn from her personal diaries, this book is an unbelievable true account of what no 15 year old junior in high school should have to endure. Melba Beals is able to capture through her words the gut wrenching pain she felt and the inexcusable mistreatment she experienced as she simply tried to get a high school education. This memoir is one I will never be able to forget, and as a high school teacher, I found that my students were unable to forget either. As the events unfold, they capture the reader, not letting go, until the very last page.

### Area 2 Coordinator – Cathi Braxton Addison

In *The Dot*, Peter Reynolds shares a fable which explores the possibilities that lie within each of us... “the creative spirit.” But what has proven so profound for me is the illustration and food for thought which it provides for us as educators regarding the positive influence and true difference that a teacher can make. Vashti’s teacher holds in the palm of her hand Vashti’s fragile self-esteem, self-confidence, and self-perception. Vashti is teetering

on the edge of the great abyss known as defeat, but her teacher gently guides her instead toward a journey of self-discovery and success. By helping Vashti find her strengths, helping her build on those strengths, and then celebrating her success, Vashti’s teacher is able to help her bloom as an artist. What a wonderful model!



Similarly, in *Ish* Reynolds demonstrates the importance of having someone who believes in you and your work when he spins another fable regarding our creative flames.



### Area 3 Coordinator – April Johnson

Brent Bishop is new to town and longs to be popular. When he is rejected and considered a misfit at a classmate’s party, he is humiliated. He begins drinking and decides he is tired of trying to fit in a world where he doesn’t belong. He feels his only option is suicide. Driving home alone from the party, he plans to end his life – only the life that is taken is not his, but an innocent young girl. Lea is only 18 years old, about to enter college and a very talented musician. As restitution, Lea’s parents request that Brent build whirligigs and place them in the four corners of the United States as a way of letting the world know about Lea. As Brent begins his journey of repentance, he soon realizes that while he can’t bring Lea back, her spirit will live on in the whirligigs. Brent soon learns to atone for his actions and rediscovers his love for life.



*Whirligig* by Paul Fleischman is a wonderful book for Middle School and High School students. It is a beautiful story of atonement, self-respect, learning to live with the consequences of one’s actions, and discovering that what we do can have a profound influence on others.

### Area 4 Coordinator – Linda Tuschinski

I have long been planning for this issue and “my book” that I want to talk about. However, that book keeps changing, and having just returned from the ALAN (Assembly on Literature for Adolescents of the National Council of Teachers of English) Conference I am REALLY in a dilemma! Having the privilege of being in the company of such authors as Laurie Halse Anderson, Joseph Bruchac, Kate

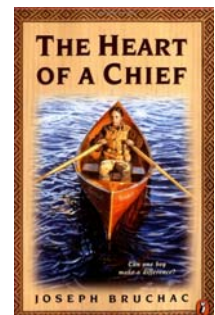
DiCamillo, Paul Fleishman, Walter Dean Myers, Alex Flinn, Yann Martel to name but a few and hearing them speak and share their experiences is an unbelievably humbling yet enlightening experience. So many great books and so little time to read became my mantra. As space will not permit me to “book talk” many of them, I will attempt to choose just one or two. I would also recommend all to consider joining ALAN (<http://www.alan-ya.org/>) and you will receive quarterly reviews of the latest and best of YA literature.



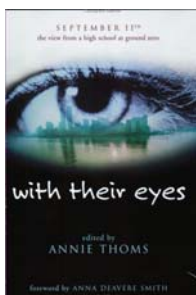
Most fans of YA literature know of Laurie Halse Anderson and of her books, *Speak*, *Prom*, and *Catalyst*, but possibly fewer know of her book *Thank you Sarah: The Woman Who Saved Thanksgiving* illustrated by Matt Faulkner. I was first drawn to the book because of the illustrations in caricature of Abe Lincoln, a soldier, a football player, and a mom holding an apple pie on the back of the book – and the title, as it was that time of the year. Picture books have a hold on me that I can never resist. As I was reading this one and enjoying the many more pictures I discovered that I was in the middle of a history lesson and not just about

Thanksgiving. Sarah Josepha Buell Hale proves time and again that the “pen is mightier than the sword.” When Sarah thought something wasn’t right, she picked up her pen. Fearing that the significance of Thanksgiving Day was fading she petitioned four presidents with thousands of letters until Lincoln finally listened to her and made it a holiday. Sarah’s writing was not limited to Thanksgiving, we learn she wrote for many causes and became famous. Did you know that she is the author of “Mary Had a Little Lamb”? She was an activist but a gentle one who continued her writing for just causes and publishing her magazine until she retired at the age of eighty-nine years old. Not only historical lessons are found in this book, but people of all ages will also find value lessons such as perseverance and peaceful resolutions. Laurie Halse Anderson is an entertaining speaker and writer and this is a book that can only enhance all collections.

Joseph Bruchac is the author of many books revolving around the Native American culture which is part of his heritage. In *The Heart of a Chief* we meet Chris Nicola, a resident of the Penacook Indian Reservation, as he enters sixth grade. We see him emerge as a courageous leader as he balances his heritage and the life of a middle school student both on and off the reservation. He is chosen as a leader for a group project about using Indian names for sports teams which can only inspire controversy. We meet his family circle with their unique struggles and become involved with the pros and cons of whether to allow a casino on a beautiful part of their reservation. In this book Mr. Bruchac presents young people with a perspective of courage and leadership and a view of one boy’s ability to keep things in balance through the “sacred circle of life.”

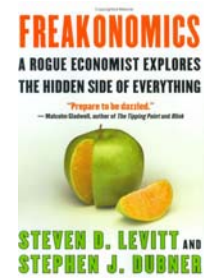


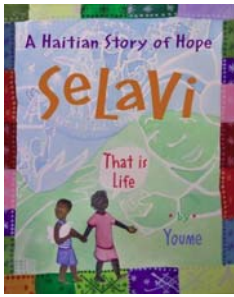
### Area 5 Coordinator – Charla Bauer



*With Their Eyes* contains a drama providing an eyewitness account of history through the eyes of students at New York’s Stuyvestant High School on September 11, 2001. In the classroom, it provides an excellent demonstration of critical literacies; as a gift for an adolescent on your list, it affirms a place in a moment of history.

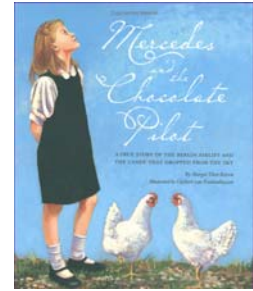
*Freakonomics* provides new perspectives on our times for adults, college, and high school students. The specialized topic is presented in user-friendly terms that could easily be integrated into a Social Studies classroom. For the person looking for an excited conversation on controversial issues, share this book with friends.





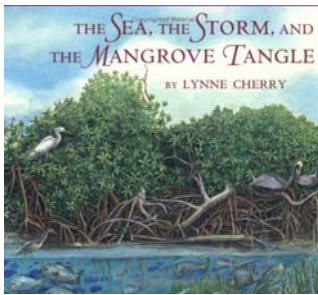
*Selavi* is a perfect commemoration of the year 2005. A story in words and pictures of how children can make a difference in their world is told for readers of all ages. Children surviving on the streets of Haiti share the colors of their world with compassion and hope. This non-fiction cultural study could easily be used in the classroom to initiate social action; at home, it could open important discussions in a family with young children.

*Mercedes and the Chocolate Pilot* is a first hand account of World War II pilots who delivered chocolate to children in Berlin. Mercedes remembers the chocolate deliveries from her childhood and tells the story from her own perspective. An added bonus is in the voice of the pilot who delivered those chocolates, retired Lt. Colonel Gail Halvorsen of the US Air Force. This is a wonderful book of hope and action to share with young people today.



### Area 6 Coordinator – Constance Cain

The new year is a great time to think about renewing ourselves and our environment. *The Sea, The Storm and The Mangrove Tangle* can be a terrific springboard for examining the changes that have



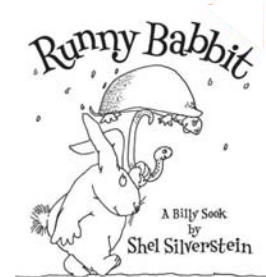
occurred in Florida in the past five decades. In the 1950s, Florida was sparsely populated and the lifestyle was more agrarian than metropolitan. From Jacksonville to Key West great mangrove swamps nourished a delicate ecological system and protected coastal lowlands from powerful storms. Where once there was a sprinkling of wood frame beach cottages, we now have concrete seawalls and high rise condominiums. It is not too late to save some of our natural resources and to understand the importance of balance in nature. Lynne Cherry wrote about the ecological systems of the mangroves and its inhabitants as they occur in many Caribbean lagoons. It is a story of a

community of living things that depend upon a tangle of mangrove trees. Written as non-fiction narrative students of all ages can learn about the principles of ecological balance from the text and rich cross section illustrations.

### Area 7 Coordinator – Marcia Halpin

*Runny Babbit: A Billy Sook* by Shel Silverstein is my pick for a perfect gift for the young and young at heart. This delightful book was published posthumously by HarperCollins Publishers in 2005. From the verso page:

Here is Runny Babbit. Completed prior to Shel's death in 1999, this was a work in progress for over twenty years. Shel Silverstein's family wishes to acknowledge the invaluable help of everyone involved in bringing this remarkable little book to life.



The world of Runny Babbit and his friends Toe Jurtle, Skertie Gunk, Rirty Dat, Hungry Hog, Sneery Jake, and many others who speak a topsy-turvy language all their own is fun and lively with pen and ink illustrations. The ordinary becomes extraordinary. Here is the poem "Runny's Heading Rabbits." Listen carefully to get the meaning. These poems are great for honing our listening skills and phonological awareness.

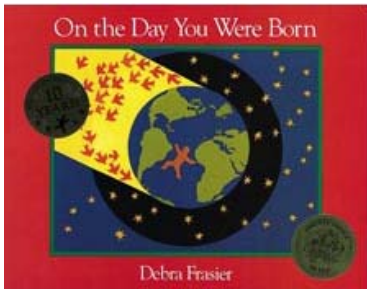
#### Runny's Heading Rabbits

Runny lent to the wibrary  
And there were bundreds of hooks—  
Bistory hooks, beography gooks,  
And lots of bory stooks.

He looked them over one by one  
And guess which one he took—  
A bience scook? A boetry pook?  
Oh, no—a bomic cook!  
~ Shel Silverstein, 2005, p. 43.

### Area 8 Coordinator – Susan Kelly

Like many others during the holiday season, I too fall prey to commercialism. Since I love to shop, the holiday justifies my indulgence. Without certain books, it might be easy for someone like me to escape the holiday season without considering the deeper meaning inherent in the giving of gifts. While books are written for many purposes, my favorite books during the holiday season are those that encourage me to reflect upon and appreciate the gifts that have been bestowed on me. Two of my favorites are *On The Day You Were Born* and *The Day We Met You*.



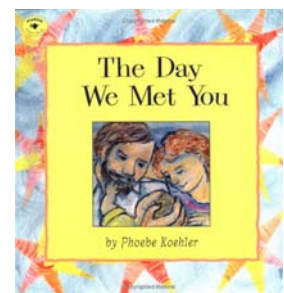
*On The Day You Were Born* was written and illustrated by Debra Frasier. The poetic text explains the complex phenomenon of birth. Anyone who has given or experienced a new baby entering the world will understand the miraculous nature of this experience. Frasier conveys this through her eloquent choice of words and paper collage illustrations. She writes, “On the day you were born the Moon pulled on the ocean below, and, wave by wave, a rising tide washed the beaches clean for your footprints. . .”. *On The Day You Were Born* celebrates the gift of life and captures the joy and emotion that can’t always be expressed with words alone.

When reading Frasier’s book, I recall giving birth to my own three sons. The joy and love I felt when they entered the world was overwhelming and could be expressed only through my tears. I am thankful to Frasier for giving voice to the emotions I experienced at that time. Through her book, I can share my joy with my sons, Dustin, Zachary and Nicholas.

As educators, we have the opportunity to convey to each of our students that their life is worth celebrating regardless of how many suspensions they have received, their recent scores on the FCAT or the amount of inadequate grades on their latest report card. While it may be disrupting to sing happy birthday, have a mother bring in cupcakes for every child in the classroom or to have a best friend deliver a balloon during the middle of class, our students are fortunate to have someone feel their life is worth celebrating.

This book is a great gift to give to someone having a baby, to a child who needs special recognition or to a teacher who can share it with his or her students.

*The Day We Met You* was written and illustrated by Phoebe Koehler. It, too, is a simple picture book that celebrates the gift of life. However, Koehler tells this story from the perspective of parents celebrating the day they meet their adopted child. It begins with the parents preparing for their new child. They purchase all the necessary equipment from diapers to car seat with the same anticipation as any other new parents. The joy they feel the day they meet their new child is conveyed by Koehler’s simple words and warm pastel illustrations much in the same way as Frasier does in *The Day You Were Born*. This comes to no surprise for anyone who has adopted a child. The love and emotion that is felt by parents whether a child is conceived naturally or through adoption is unquestionably the same!



This book reminds me of the day I met my beautiful adopted daughter, Alisha. She arrived on the second day of August; one week prior to finding out I was pregnant. Sometimes gifts are not always recognizable as gifts. Had I found out I had conceived prior to my daughter’s birth, I may not have

followed through on the adoption. In the words of my daughter, I would have been “stuck” with three boys!

*On The Day You Were Born* and *The Day We Met You* are two books that remind the reader that some gifts can't be purchased at a department store or wrapped eloquently in holiday paper. While materialistic gifts will always be part of celebrations, they can never replace the gift of life. (Teaching ideas for using *On The Day You Were Born* in the classroom may be found at:

<http://www.harcourtbooks.com/bookcatalogs/bookpage.asp?isbn=0152579958&option=teacher>.

### Area 11 Coordinator – Pam Craig



If you are looking for a great read that also provides an opportunity to learn about recent world events, then *Kite Runner* is the book for you!! Set in Afghanistan, the novel follows the life of Amir, a selfish, privileged young man raised in pre-revolution Afghanistan by a wealthy father. Amir's betrayal of his best friend leads to devastating consequences that serve as the catalyst for the remainder of the novel as Amir struggles to come to terms with his own guilt. Amir and his father flee the revolution to the United States, separating Amir from the scene of his betrayal, but events eventually lead him back to Afghanistan to face his actions.

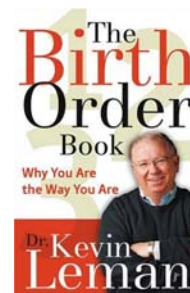
The novel provides insight into the political and religious conflicts that led to the current state of Afghanistan while keeping the reader interested in the personal conflicts of Amir. While burdened at times by seemingly impossible events and some stereotyping, the novel overcomes these errors with its well-developed characterizations and moral dilemmas. Hosseini's characters allow the reader insight into the inner conflicts that are often mirrored in outward actions.

This is an excellent novel for our own personal reading as well as a study for secondary students. It's one we'll be talking about for years to come.

### FLaRE Resource Coordinator – Betsy McClure

I have been reading a range of books this fall, from a textbook on statistics, to suspense novels (the latest being *Deception* by Sandra Brown), to dog obedience manuals. My husband and I are now the proud owners (parents?) of two lab puppies.

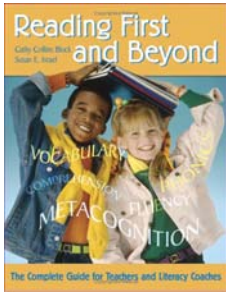
The one I am choosing to share this month, however, is about relationships and personality types. It is *The Birth Order Book: Why You are the Way You Are*, by Dr. Kevin Leman.



This is an easily read text that first describes the many different options of birth order, and possible resulting personality attributes, as well as the impact your birth order may have on your relationships, both personal and professional. It's done with insight and humor and includes closing thoughts that are grounded in research and common sense!

Did you know that of the first twenty-three astronauts in space, twenty-one were first borns and the other two were onlies? Many famous comedians, Steve Martin, Chevy Chase, Whoopi Goldberg, to name a few, are all the youngest of their sex in their families. According to Dr. Leman, birth order powerfully influences who you are, who you marry, the job you choose, and the kind of parent you are! I found this book to not only be informative, and thought-provoking, but also a great conversation topic with many of my family and friends.

## Reading First Professional Development Resource Coordinator – Karen Ladinsky



The book that Reading First coaches throughout the state have been talking about this year is *Reading First and Beyond: The Complete Guide for Teachers and Literacy Coaches* by Cathy Collins Block and Susan E. Israel. The buzz about the book began when the announcement was made at the 2005 Reading First Coaches Academy that it would serve as the focus book in the monthly Reading First coaches' meetings, facilitated by Reading First Regional Coordinators.

The reasons for selecting this book for study are numerous. First, it was written to serve as a professional development tool and resource for literacy coaches and principals. It can easily be used for building-level book study groups, which allow teachers to develop a common repertoire of literacy terms and research-based instructional approaches. It provides explicit models as to how research-based instructional practices can be included in school programs on a daily basis, and provides lesson plans for learners who struggle, who are learning English, and who excel. Simply stated, the primary goal of the book is to help coaches, principals, teachers, and parents bridge the gap between research-based evidence and reading instruction that occurs daily in classrooms.

From the beginning, the authors organize the information in the book around what is relevant to reading teachers today. The chapters address the five essential components of reading, as determined by the National Panel Report (2000). These components include: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. In addition, the authors include chapters that provide information on such topics as: the background of the No Child Left Behind legislation, research-based practices for oral language development, metacognition, and how to embrace parents as partners in the process of teaching children how to read.

I found Chapter Two, Research-Based Practices for Oral Language Development, of particular interest. When teachers realize that oral language ability allows students to decode and comprehend text, and that language allows children to create meaning, they will understand the significance of oral language development in the overall process of teaching reading! In fact, seven functions of oral language exist, and must be directly taught before many students can attain mastery of them. These functions include:

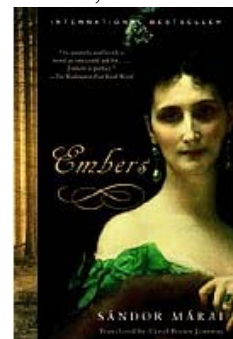
- Instrumental – using language to satisfy a need
- Regulatory – to control behavior of self and others
- Interactional – to get along with others
- Personal – to tell about oneself
- Heuristic – to discover and learn
- Imaginative – to create new ideas
- Informative – to communicate information

As I read this chapter, I realized that, as a classroom teacher, I did not fully understand these seven functions, nor did I systematically develop students' ability with them.

Thus, through my own reading and reflection, I once again see the need for continuous professional development for teachers charged with helping all students become successful readers. That is the beauty of a book like *Reading First and Beyond*; it provides a professional development tool, written in easy-to-understand language, with information both essential and relevant to today's teachers of reading.

## FLaRE Faculty Fellow, FGCU Professor – Dr. Charleen Olliff

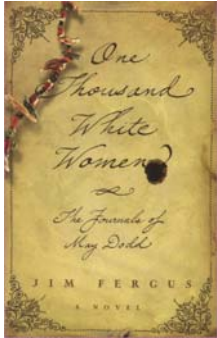
How long must one wait to resolve the suspected betrayal of a best friend and an adored wife? How, without knowing the motivations of others, does one interpret events of the past? These are the questions pondered by the old General as he awaits a long anticipated conversation with man who was once his closest friend. Through



his memories and an evening's conversation with his former friend, the old General examines the nature of friendship and trust between man and friend, man and wife.

Sandor Marai is an Hungarian author whose works are currently being translated for English audiences. The novel *Embers* was originally published in Hungary in 1942 and is set in the last days of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Marai develops his story through foreshadowing and inferences regarding the relationships and actions of his characters. As events unfold, the reader is drawn into the tension growing between the characters. This is an excellent narrative that rivets the reader's attention as the author draws one further and further into the unraveling of the General's expectations for his life.

### FLaRE Faculty Fellow, FGCU Associate Dean – Dr. Linda Ray



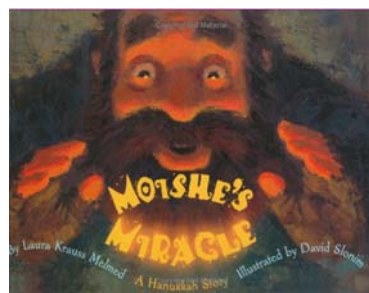
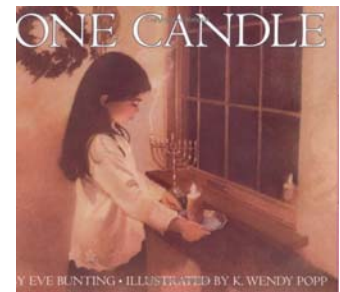
Although this isn't a children's book or adolescent fiction that educators are drawn to, I found *One Thousand White Women* by Jim Fergus to be one of the most intriguing historical fiction pieces I have read in a long time. It's written from the point of view of May Dodd through her journal. The story is based on an actual historical event: in 1854 at a peace conference at Fort Laramie, a Northern Cheyenne chief requested of the U.S. Army the gift of 1,000 white women as brides for his warriors. In the Cheyenne society, children belong to the mother's tribe so the Indians saw this as a way to assimilate into the white man's culture. The request was not well received and never honored; however, Ferguson writes this novel as if it was.

The book chronicles the selection of the brides, their trip across country, and their life among the Cheyennes. Many of the women assimilated into the Indian culture but just as many could not leave their white culture behind. It's a fascinating look into life in the wild west and the beliefs and rituals of the Cheyennes.

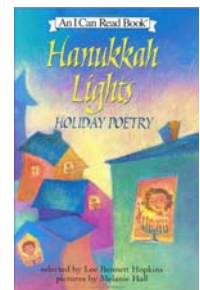
The novel presents a full description of the Cheyenne way of life, the prejudice of outsiders, and the misunderstandings among humans that can ultimately bring about sorrow. I hope you enjoy this book as much as I did.

### FLaRE Faculty Fellow, FIU Associate Professor – Dr. Joyce Fine

Eve Bunting sensitively shares a family's celebration of Hanukkah as a grandmother retells her Hanukkah experience in a Concentration Camp. While recommended for ages 4-8 by the publisher, *One Candle* is one book that could easily be shared on another level by adolescents and adults who will be able to discuss how a person identifies herself or himself in the present and historically; that all people are situated in events that may define them, but that they have choice to define.



This tale of Moishe, the poor milkman in the poor village of Wishniak, generously lives his life helping others despite ridicule by his sharp-tongued wife. The motif of a magic pot, this time filled with never ending Hanukkah latkes, adds the magical element. The plot is complicated by the wife's greed and pointy-eared demons. *Moishe's Miracle* is great for appreciating literary qualities and comparing with other magic-pot traditional tales.

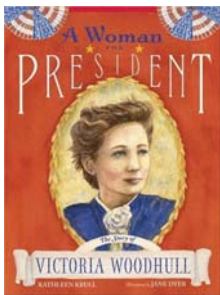
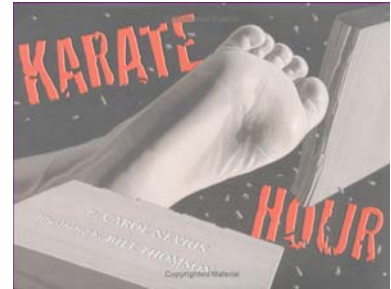


Getting dizzy spinning dreidels, lighting candles in the night, remembering miracles from the past, beginning readers will enjoy sharing the activities of Hanukkah in verse in *Hanukkah Lights: Holiday Poetry*.



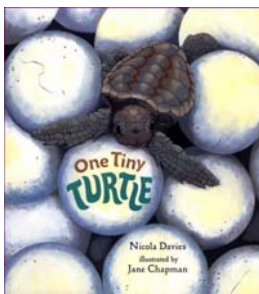
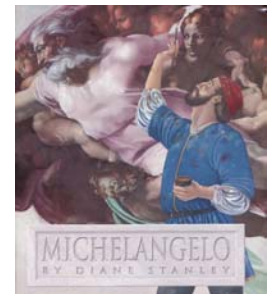
For all those young readers who like a scary story, *The Wolves in the Walls* will be memorable. The shadowy drawings by illustrator Dave McKean, the onomatopoeia, the descriptors, the changes in font size all add to the effect. If a teacher wanted to study it with students to learn writing techniques, the author has included plenty that come out and grab you.

*Karate Hour* by Carol Nevius, a Florida author, captures the essence of karate lessons in verse while Bill Thomson's unique perspective illustrations bring the full impact to life. The action-packed moves are described in rhythmical words while the multicultural, realistic pictures of both girls and boys help to establish the sport's other impact—importance of self-control and respect for all for one to grow in mind and body.



The restrictions of the Victorian Era did not hold back a woman who deserves to be remembered for more than just being the first woman to become a candidate for the Presidency of the United States. Victoria Woodhull lived her life taking on the challenges of her day. *A Woman for President: The Story of Victoria Woodhull* can serve as a great example of a strong female who was always a positive problem-solver.

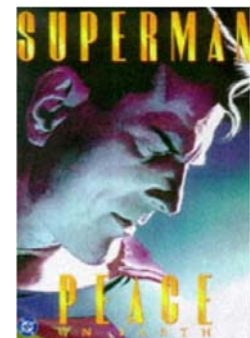
Another wonderful biography by Diane Stanley helps us appreciate the world of Michelangelo. The authentic photographs within add to the authenticity of the book. *Michelangelo* is for anyone at any age to learn about the development of a master.



*One Tiny Turtle*, an International Reading Association Teacher's Choice Award winner, focuses on the fascinating life cycle and habits of Loggerhead turtles. Beginning readers quickly appreciate the amazing facts while enjoying beautiful, two-page picture spreads of these turtles in their natural environment. The different print sizes, with some swimming across the illustrations, provide authentic information about this awesome creature.

### Information Services Coordinator – Larry Bedenbaugh

In last month's newsletter focusing on motivation, I included an article on using Graphic Novels to motivate reluctant readers. This month I return to suggest a graphic novel most appropriate for this time of the year. As a child, my favorite super-hero was Superman. I often wondered what our world would be like if someone with his powers really existed. Would Superman be able to eliminate many of our world's problems (e.g., war, hunger, poverty, etc.)? *Superman: Peace on Earth* shows us that there are some things that even a superman cannot accomplish by himself. Paul Dini's story and Alex Ross's illustrations provide a compelling example of why this genre has such an appeal.



## Featured Books

*A Woman for President : The Story of Victoria Woodhull* by Kathleen Krull

- Hardcover: 32 pages
- Publisher: Walker Books for Young Readers (August, 2004)
- ISBN: 0802789080

*Embers* by Marai, Sandor, translated by Carol Brown Janeway

- Paperback: 224 pages
- Publisher: Vintage (August, 2002)
- ISBN: 0375707425

*Freakonomics : A Rogue Economist Explores the Hidden Side of Everything* by Steven D. Levitt and Stephen J. Dubner

- Hardcover: 256 pages
- Publisher: William Morrow (May, 2005)
- ISBN: 006073132X

*Hanukkah Lights: Holiday Poetry* by Lee Bennett Hopkins

- Hardcover: 32 pages
- Publisher: HarperCollins (October, 2004)
- ISBN: 0060080515

*Ish* by Peter H. Reynolds

- Hardcover: 32 pages
- Publisher: Candlewick (August, 2004)
- ISBN: 076362344X

*Karate Hour* by Carol Nevius

- Hardcover: 32 pages
- Publisher: Marshall Cavendish Children's Books (October, 2004)
- ISBN: 0761451692

*Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini

- Paperback: 384 pages
- Publisher: Riverhead Trade (April, 2004)
- ISBN: 1594480001

*Langston's Train Ride* by Robert Burleigh

- Hardcover: 32 pages
- Publisher: Orchard (October, 2004)
- ISBN: 0439352398

*Mercedes and the Chocolate Pilot: A True Story of the Berlin Airlift and the Candy That Dropped from the Sky* by Margot Theis Raven

- Hardcover: 48 pages
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