



Briefings

Winter 2003

California Library Association

Children's and Young Adult Services Section

NEWS AND NOTES

New "Harry Potter" book finally ready:

J.K. Rowling's 5th in the Potter series, Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix, will go on sale June 21st. Readers have been waiting nearly a year for this follow-up to the July 2000 release of Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire, which was the 4th book in the series. "Order of the Phoenix" will be a third longer than "Goblet of Fire."

"Briefings" Resumes Publication After Two Year Break

The Children's and Young Adult Services Section of the California Library Association has decided to bring back "Briefings," its quarterly newsletter, after a two year absence. The new "Briefings" will be co-edited by Penny Peck, Senior Librarian Youth Services at the San Leandro Public Library, and Marie L. Carlsson, children's librarian at the Mar Vista Branch of the Los Angeles Public Library.

Penny and Marie bring a variety of experience to "Briefings." Penny has been at the San Leandro Public Library for 17 years, and is also an adjunct at San Jose State University, teaching children's literature. Penny is also the editor of "BayNews," the newsletter for the Association of Children's Librarians of Northern California. Marie is a recent graduate of UCLA's library school and will bring a fresh approach to "Briefings." Marie interned at three different libraries during her studies. With Penny in Northern California and Marie in Southern California, they hope to have the state "covered."

Presidential Musings...

By Cynthia M. Olsen

There are few careers where a person can have continuity in her work like a children's librarian. We meet the children

as preschoolers (or infants or toddlers at some libraries,) watch them grow and become independent readers, see them regularly for summer reading and assignment reading, and encourage them in the step from short chapter books to long. Unlike teachers who only see the child for one school year, we will literally watch them grow up-in reading skills and reading tastes. That means our reading knowledge has to span a wide range. And we have to keep current with the latest works. I find that can be the hardest thing to do, even though I am reviewing books monthly. The new titles don't always stick in my mind.

It's very easy to fall back on old favorites. But if a request for a picture book suggestion always results in "Where the Wild Things Are," is it because it's a classic or that it was new when you were in library school and studying Children's Literature? Try listing your automatic responses to various age groups; if all your books are older titles, make an effort to add at least one newly published title for each age group to your mental resources. Make sure it is one you have actually read-- not just the reviews, but the book itself.

With ordering new books and weeding out old ones, providing reference assistance, programming, visiting schools, advocating for children and their literacy needs, writing reports, and writing grants, who has time to read? If anything, as children's librarians, we tend to skim, focusing on how a book can be used. But I feel the real benefit of being a children's librarian is to make a bridge between that special book and a child. The voracious readers are a joy (usually) and the reluctant ones a challenge, but the connection is just as important for both. So read, read and remember as much as you can. Despite the multitude of reference sources for reading advisory, there is no better recommendation than a personal one.

Submit your writing to "Briefings:"

Submit columns, letters, Bulletin Board suggestions, and other material to "Briefings" by emailing co-editors Penny Peck and Marie Carlsson at PIKLY@aol.com. All submissions or suggestions are welcome!



NEWBERY AND CALDECOTT

WINNERS ANNOUNCED

American Library Association announces award winners; Avi, Rohmann receive 2003 Newbery, Caldecott medals

Avi, author of "Crispin: The Cross of Lead," and Eric Rohmann, illustrator and author of "My Friend Rabbit," are the 2003 winners of the John Newbery and Randolph Caldecott medals, the most prestigious awards in children's literature. They were among the award winners announced on January 27 during the 2003 American Library Association (ALA) Midwinter Meeting in Philadelphia. Considered the "Academy Awards" of children's book publishing, the Newbery and Caldecott Medals honor outstanding writing and illustration of works published in the United States during the previous year. "Crispin: The Cross of Lead," published by Hyperion Books for Children, is an action-filled page-turner set in 14th-century England. "Avi masterfully creates a plot that sustains tension and suspense from beginning to end, while seamlessly weaving in details of daily medieval life," said Starr LaTronica, chair of the 2003 Newbery Award committee. "Readers experience Crispin's surroundings through Avi's sensory descriptions; they see, hear, smell, taste and feel his world. In the hands of a superb craftsman, 'Crispin' is a fascinating coming-of-age novel that brings to readers a riveting adventure and invites them to consider how life hundreds of years ago echoes our contemporary search for freedom." The 2003 Caldecott Medal for illustration was awarded to Eric Rohmann for "My Friend Rabbit," published by Roaring Brook Press, a division of The Millbrook Press. In the book, Mouse shares his brand-new toy airplane with his friend Rabbit, and no one can predict the disastrous—but hilarious—results. "Eric Rohmann's hand-colored relief prints express a vibrant energy through solid black outlines, lightly textured backgrounds and a robust use of color," said Pat Scales, chair of the 2003 Caldecott Award committee. Five Newbery Honor Books were named: "The House of the Scorpion," by Nancy Farmer, a Richard Jackson Book/Atheneum Books for Young Readers, an imprint of Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing Division; "Pictures of Hollis Woods," by Patricia Reilly Giff and published by Wendy Lamb Books, an imprint of Random House Children's Books, a division of Random House, Inc.; "Hoot," by Carl Hiaasen and published by Alfred A. Knopf, an imprint of Random House Children's Books, a division of Random House, Inc.; "A Corner of the Universe," by Ann M. Martin and published by Scholastic Press, a division of Scholastic, Inc.; and "Surviving the Applewhites," by

Stephanie S. Tolan and published by HarperCollins Children's Books, a division of HarperCollins. Three Caldecott Honor Books were named: "The Spider and the Fly," illustrated by Tony DiTerlizzi, written by Mary Howitt and published by Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers; "Hondo & Fabian," illustrated and written by Peter McCarty and published by Henry Holt & Company LLC; and "Noah's Ark," illustrated and written by Jerry Pinkney and published by SeaStar Books, a division of North-South Books Inc. The awards are administered by the Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC), a division of the ALA.

Coretta Scott King Awards

Nikki Grimes, author of "Bronx Masquerade," and E.B. Lewis, illustrator of "Talkin' About Bessie: The Story of Aviator Elizabeth Coleman," are winners of the 2003 Coretta Scott King Awards honoring African-American authors and illustrators of outstanding books for children and young adults. Janet McDonald, author of "Chill Wind," is the Coretta Scott King/John Steptoe New Talent (text) Award; and Randy DuBurke is the Steptoe New Talent (illustrator) Award. "Bronx Masquerade," published by Dial Books for Young Readers, is a fast-paced and revealing novel that features the voices of 18 urban youth who share their innermost feelings in their open-mic poetry presentations. In "Talking About Bessie: The Story of Aviator Elizabeth Coleman," also written by Grimes and published by Orchard Books, an imprint of Scholastic, Inc., winning illustrator E.B. Lewis places Bessie at the center of each gracefully composed painting. His precise attention to historic detail in oversized watercolor paintings parallels and extends Grimes' poetry. Occasionally awarded, the Coretta Scott King/John Steptoe New Talent Award affirms new talent and offers visibility to excellence in writing or illustration at the beginning of a career as a published children's book creator. "Chill Wind" by Janet McDonald is the story of Aisha, an unwed teen mother of two, who is forced to face the termination of welfare benefits. The book is published by Frances Foster Books/Farrar, Straus and Giroux. "The Moon Ring," illustrated and written by Randy DuBurke, sends his main character, Maxine, on a wild and surreal adventure across space and time that begins with a simple wish on a magic ring. The book is published by Chronicle Books. Two King Author Honor Books were selected: "Talkin' About Bessie: The Story of Aviator Elizabeth Coleman" and "Red Rose Box" by Brenda Woods and published by G.P. Putnam's Sons. Two King Illustrator Honor Books were selected: "Rap A Tap Tap: Here's Bojangles – Think of That," illustrated and written by Leo and Diane Dillon and published by Blue Sky Press, an imprint of Scholastic, Inc.; and "Visiting Langston," illustrated by Bryan Collier, written by Willie Perdomo and published by Henry Holt and Co. Books for Young Readers.

Michael L. Printz Award

Aidan Chambers is the winner of the 2003 Michael L. Printz

Award for his powerful novel, "Postcards from No Man's Land." Published by Dutton Books/Penguin Putnam Inc., Chambers' novel is a passionate narrative about 17-year-old Jacob, who comes to Amsterdam to find the grave of his grandfather who died there during World War II. He meets Geertrui, the Dutch woman who cared for his wounded grandfather. Her teenage World War II story is interwoven with Jacob's surprising discoveries about love, sex, family secrets and his own identity. Three Printz Honor Books were named: "Hole in My Life," by Jack Gantos, published by Farrar, Straus and Giroux; "My Heartbeat," by Garret Freymann-Weyr, published by Houghton Mifflin Company; and "The House of the Scorpion," by Nancy Farmer, published by A Richard Jackson Book/Atheneum Books for Young Readers, an imprint of Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing Division. The annual award for excellence in young adult literature is administered by the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA), a division of ALA, and sponsored by *Booklist* magazine.

Robert F. Sibert

James Cross Giblin, author of "The Life and Death of Adolf Hitler," was named the winner of the 2003 Robert F. Sibert Informational Book Award for most distinguished informational book for children. In the book, published by Clarion Books, a Houghton Mifflin Company imprint, Giblin poses and answers three questions in this compelling, accessible account of Hitler, his world and his legacy. "What sort of man could plan and carry out such horrendous schemes, how did he win support for his deadly ventures and why did no one stop him until it was almost too late?" Four Sibert Honor books also were named: "Six Days in October: The Stock Market Crash of 1929," by Karen Blumenthal, published by Atheneum Books for Young Readers, an imprint of Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing Division; "Hole in My Life," by Jack Gantos, published by Farrar, Straus & Giroux; "Action Jackson," by Jan Greenberg and Sandra Jordan, illustrated by Robert Andrew Parker, published by A Neal Porter Book/Roaring Brook Press, a division of The Millbrook Press; and "When Marian Sang," by Pam Muñoz Ryan, illustrated by Brian Selznick and published by Scholastic Press, a division of Scholastic, Inc. The annual award is administered by ALSC and is sponsored by Bound to Stay Bound Books, Inc., of Jacksonville, Ill., in honor of its longtime president.

Margaret A. Edwards Award

Nancy Garden, author of "Annie on My Mind" (1982), is the recipient of the Margaret A. Edwards Award honoring her lifetime contribution in writing for young adults. Garden's writing encompasses nonfiction and a range of fiction from historical to fantasy to realistic. "Nancy Garden has the distinction of being the first author for young adults to create a lesbian love story with a positive ending," said Award Committee Chair Rosemary Chance, an assistant professor at The University of Southern Mississippi. "Annie on My Mind" is published by Farrar, Straus & Giroux. The

award is administered by YALSA and sponsored by *School Library Journal*.

Andrew Carnegie Medal

Paul R. Gagne and Melissa Reilly of Weston Woods Studios, producers of "So You Want to Be President?" based on the Caldecott Medal-winning book by Judith St. George and illustrated by David Small, are the 2003 recipients of the Andrew Carnegie Medal for Excellence in Children's Video. The video is narrated by Stockard Channing with music by Scotty Huff and Robert Reynolds. Playful renditions of "Hail to the Chief" provide a musical backdrop for St. George's portrayal of the diverse and often eccentric men who have held our nation's highest office. The Carnegie Medal, established with the support of the Carnegie Corporation of New York, honors an outstanding American video production for children released during the previous year. It is administered by ALSC, a division of ALA.

Laura Ingalls Wilder Award

Eric Carle, best known for his picture books for young children, is the 2003 Laura Ingalls Wilder Award winner. His numerous picture books include "The Very Hungry Caterpillar;" "Do You Want to Be My Friend?" "The Tiny Seed" and "From Head to Toe." "Eric Carle's visual observations of the natural world encourage the imagination and often mirror the larger changes in a young child's development and experience," said Wilder Award Committee Chair Ginny Moore Kruse, former director of the Cooperative Children's Book Center, School of Education, University of Wisconsin - Madison. Born in Syracuse, N.Y., in 1929, Carle moved with his parents to Germany in 1935. He came back to the United States in 1952, first working as a graphic designer for *The New York Times*. Later, his work was noticed by Bill Martin, Jr., who invited Carle to illustrate his text for the still-popular picture book, "Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?" (Holt, 1967). The award honors an author or illustrator, published in the United States, whose books have made a substantial and lasting contribution to literature for children. It is administered by ALSC.

Mildred L. Batchelder Award

The Chicken House, an imprint of Scholastic Inc., was named winner of the 2003 Mildred L. Batchelder Award for the most outstanding children's book originally published in a foreign language and subsequently translated into English for publication in the United States for "The Thief Lord." Originally published in Germany in 2000, the book was written by Cornelia Funke and translated by Oliver Latsch. Two orphaned brothers, Prosper, 12, and Bo, 5, come to Venice on the run from relatives who intend to separate them. The Batchelder committee selected one honor book, published by David R. Godine. "Henrietta and the Golden Eggs" by Hanna Johansen and illustrated by Käthi Bhend, was translated by John Barrett. The book was originally

published in German under the title, "Vom Hühnchen das goldene Eier legen wollte." The Batchelder Award is administered by ALSC.

May Hill Arbuthnot Honor Lecture Award

Ursula K. Le Guin, distinguished writer of science fiction and fantasy for young people and adults, will deliver the 2004 May Hill Arbuthnot Honor Lecture. Each year, an individual of distinction in the field of children's literature is chosen to write and deliver a lecture that will make a significant contribution to the world of children's literature. Le Guin, who was born in 1929 in Berkeley, Calif., and currently lives in Portland, Ore., has written more than 50 books, including poetry, criticism, picture books, novels and short stories. She has received numerous awards and honors during her long career. "Beginning with the 'Books of Earthsea,' Ursula Le Guin's fantasy novels have broken new ground while exploring themes of enduring importance to young people," said Arbuthnot Committee Chair Penny Markey. "They continue to assist young people as they explore issues of identity, power, alienation and values." The award is administered by ALSC.

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BAY AREA LIBRARIANS WRITE NEW LATINO CRAFT BOOK

Pavon, Ana-Elba, and Borrego, Diana. 25 Latino Craft Projects. "Celebrating Culture In Your Library" series, ALA, 2003. \$30.00/0-8389-0833-0.

Ana-Elba Pavon, Children's Services Manager at the San Francisco Public Library's Mission Branch, and Diana Borrego, children's librarian at the San Jose Public Library, have written a new book on Latino craft projects for librarians and teachers to use in libraries and schools. Part of the "Celebrating Culture's In Your Library" series from ALA (American Library Association,) the book stems from a program the authors did at a California Library Association Conference five years ago. They are also both active members in Biblioteca Para La Gente, the Northern California chapter of REFORMA.

These two children's librarians should be congratulated for such a practical, useful book that is chock full of ideas to

use for library programming. Crafts are not the only thing. There are also recipes, history on many Latino holidays and celebrations, and an annotated booklist of stories that are perfect for library storyhours.

The introductory chapter offers a wealth of advice on library programming in general including advertising your program, using volunteers, holding a raffle, proceeding through registration, using music and poetry in your storytimes, and evaluating your success. Many of the books and songs offered in the bibliography are in Spanish and English, making them easy to use in a Bilingual Storytime, which is a growing trend in California.

But librarians in states with few Latino residents will still find this advice useful because they do such a good job of explaining the history and culture and offer clear step-by-step instructions for the projects. They even list vendors from which you can order supplies in case you live in an area without a Mexican grocery store. Of course, most of the crafts use tissue paper, glue, yarn, clay, and paints; these are materials many of us keep in our offices for spur of the moment craft programs!

Every library and school in California will find this book useful. Even "craft-phobic" people will find something they can do like the simple straw streamers or paper beads. I look forward to the next book from Pavon and Borrego!

Penny Peck,
San Leandro Public Library

What's happening in the national arena in terms of children's and youth services?

Since I now serve on the American Library Association Literacy Assembly, I thought I would share their latest efforts and interests as I heard them at the ALA mid-winter conference.

The Literacy Assembly operates within the ALA policy 50.6 on literacy, which supports organizational and institutional efforts. The Office for Literacy and Outreach Services (OLOS) acts as the coordinating body (<http://www.ala.org/olos/>). Its mission statement is as follows:

The Office for Literacy and Outreach Services (OLOS) serves the Association by supporting and promoting literacy and equity of information access initiatives for traditionally underserved populations. These populations include new and non-readers, people geographically isolated, people with disabilities, rural and urban poor people, and people generally discriminated against based on race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, language and social class.

OLOS continues its strategic planning process. A number of literacy-related meetings and sessions are being

designed for the 2003 Toronto meeting including a preconference on Immigration's impact on 21st century collection development.

Several initiatives are pending:

- www.buildliteracy.org. This is a rich site on literacy information.
- www.firstfind.info. This virtual library site targets low-literate end users (mainly adult, but with application to young adults).
- www.nationaloutreach.org. This site provides community engagement through public TV (PBS) and includes literacy activities.
- www.natcoalitionliteracy.org. The National Coalition for Literacy continues to implement the National Literacy Summit 2000 Action Agenda.
- OLOS works with IMLS to insure that literacy programs will be explicitly encouraged and supported. (www.imls.gov)
- OLOS surveys library schools to see what literacy courses are taught in their programs.

Other libraries and individuals are also dealing with literacy efforts:

- Howard (MD) Public Library has a partnership between the public and school libraries, which includes literacy initiatives; it is called the A+ Program.
- Plymouth (MA) PL has a popular literacy technology lab.
- Lesley Farmer is writing a book on student achievement, which has a chapter on reading and literacy. The bibliography is used by the AASL committee dealing with literacy.

Lesley S. J. Farmer,
Cal. St. Univ. Long Beach

BULLETIN BOARD

CONFERENCE PROPOSALS NEEDED

Anyone interested in putting on a workshop at the November 2003 CLA conference, to be held in Ontario, California, should contact Leslie Farmer at lfarmer@csulb.edu. Workshops will run an hour and 15 minutes.

ASSOCIATION OF CHILDREN' LIBRARIANS TO HOLD PERFORMERS' SHOWCASE AND INSTITUTE

The Association of Children's Librarians of Northern California have two upcoming workshops: The Performers' Showcase, where librarians can view samples of nearly 40 different performers, will be held on

Saturday, February 22, 2003 at the San Leandro Public Library, 300 Estudillo Ave. See puppet shows, magicians, jugglers, storytellers, and others interested in doing library programs for children and families. Registration is \$10 in advance and \$15 at the door. Email Penny Peck at ppeck@ci.san-leandro.ca.us for registration information. The annual ACL Institute is called "Caught In The Middle: Serving the Middle School Reader (the 6th-8th Grader,)" and will be held on Thursday, April 10, 2003, 9:00am-3:00pm at the San Francisco Main Library. Speakers include Newbery Honor author Joan Bauer ([Hope Was Here](#)), nonfiction author Elizabeth Partridge ([This Land Was Made For You And Me: The Life and Songs of Woody Guthrie](#)), comic book store owner Rory Root, librarian Patty Carleton, and adolescent medicine expert Erica Monasterio. For registration form, visit www.bayviews.org.

5TH ANNUAL "READING THE WORLD" CONFERENCE AT UNIV. OF SAN FRANCISCO

On March 1 & 2, 2003, the Univ. of San Francisco will host the 5th annual "Reading the World" conference. Celebrating multicultural literature for children and young adults, scheduled presenters include Leo & Diane Dillon, Pat Mora, Gerald McDermott, Naomi Shihab Nye, Ji-Li Jiang, and many others. For more information, visit www.usfca.edu/childlit.

TURNING BABIES ON TO BOOKS

Wednesday March 5, 2003
Sunnyvale Public Library
665 W. Olive Avenue, Sunnyvale
Registration and coffee 8:30-9:00 a.m.
Program 9:00 - 11:45 a.m.
Book signing 11:45-12:15
Registration fee: \$15.00

For questions about the program, or to receive program flyers/registration forms, please contact:
Karin Bricker, City of Mountain View Public Library
(650)526-7042
karin.bricker@ci.mtnview.ca.us

Speaker: Linda Potter Acredolo: Linda has been a professor of Psychology at U.C. Davis since 1984. With co-author Susan Goodwyn, she has written "Baby Minds: brain building games your baby will love" and "Baby Signs: how to talk with your baby before your baby can talk." Drawing from research indicating specific early experiences that are important to later reading, Linda Acredolo will alert participants to inborn talents children bring to literacy and describe simple ways to develop a baby's love for books.

BALIS WORKSHOP: ISN'T IT TIME FOR THEM TO GO HOME?

The Bay Area Library & Information System Children's Services Committee is sponsoring a half-day workshop, "Isn't It Time for them to Go Home?" Serving your library's "live-in kids."

DATE: Friday, March 14 at Fremont Main Library, 2400 Stevenson Blvd, Fremont, CA 94538. Registration and coffee are from 8:30-9:00, and the program runs from 9-12:15.

Speakers will include:

--Norma Myerholz-Seltz, Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, child development specialist and faculty member at Diablo Valley College, who will talk about building resiliency in children;
--Rachel MacLachlan, Director of Security at San Francisco Public Library;
--Mary Nacu, branch manager and former children's librarian at San Jose Public Library (where accommodating after-school crowds has made the news!) There will be a panel discussion and time for questions, answers, and sharing ideas. If you're a Children's Librarian and have sample activities, do-it-yourself crafts, or any related material, please bring copies to share. There will be time for discussion and questions. Registration is \$15 in advance (received by March 1) or \$18 at the door. For questions about the program, or to receive a registration form, contact: Bonnie Janssen, Alameda County Library
bjanssen@aclibrary.org
(510)745-1591

NORTH STATE CHILDREN'S SERVICES WORKSHOP

The Children's Services Committee of the North State Cooperative Library System will hold its annual Spring Workshop on Friday April 25, 2003 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Tehama County Library in Red Bluff. This year's theme will revolve around storytime activities that extend the books and stories we tell. With the assistance of Morgan Jordan, professional children's entertainer, the upcoming workshop will focus on enrichment activities, particularly music and puppets. For information, call Jenny Grenfell (530)841-4176 or e-mail her at KermitLibrary@aol.com.

ANGELICA CARPENTER TO LEAD TOUR: Angelica Carpenter, curator of the Arne Nixon Center for the Study of Children's Literature at CSU Fresno, will be leading the tour "Literary Gardens: Children's Literature & Garden Tour," in England in May, 2003. To find out more information including price, itinerary, etc., phone (800)995-4650.

The California Young Reader Medal Nominees 2002-2003

The California Young Reader Medal program encourages children to experience the joys of reading for pleasure by inviting them to read several nominated books and vote for their favorite. The nominated books are suggested by children, parents, teachers, and librarians, and the final list is

created by the CYRM committee after a lengthy process of discussion and voting. The books must be original works of fiction published within the last five years by a living author and must have plenty of child appeal.

Children can read in any category they like but must read all the books in a category to be eligible to vote. Ballots are due by April 1st, 2003 at the CYRM headquarters. Winning titles are announced in May, and the authors and illustrators of the winning titles receive their CYRM awards at special ceremonies held at the annual conferences of the four sponsoring organizations: California Association of Teachers of English, California Library Association, California Reading Association, and California School Library Association.

Hundreds of enthusiastic teachers and librarians across the state take part in this program. For more information, please go to

www.cla-net.org/groups/cyrm.

The nominated titles for 2002 – 2003 are:

Primary:

Child, Lauren. *I Will Never, Not Ever Eat a Tomato*. Candlewick, 2000.
Cronin, Doreen. *Click, Clack, Moo, Cows That Type*. Simon & Schuster, 2000.
Lin, Grace. *The Ugly Vegetables*. Charlesbridge, 1999.
Saltzberg, Barney. *The Soccer Mom from Outer Space*. Crown, 2000.
Thomas, Shelley. *Good Night, Good Night*. Dutton, 2000.

Intermediate:

DiCamillo, Kate. *Because of Winn Dixie*. Candlewick, 2000.
Hill, Patrick. *The Year of Miss Agnes*. Simon & Schuster, 2000.
Ibbotson, Eva. *Island of the Aunts*. Dutton, 2000.

Middle School/Jr. High:

Mikaelson, Ben. *Touching Spirit Bear*. HarperCollins, 2001.
Ryan, Pam Munoz. *Esperanza Rising*. Scholastic, 2000.
Weeks, Sarah. *Guy Time*. HarperCollins, 2000.

High School:

Anderson, Laurie Halse. *Speak*. Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1999.
Bauer, Joan. *Hope Was Here*. Putnam, 2000.
Peters, Julie Anne. *Define 'Normal.'* Little, Brown, 2000.

Picture Books for Older Readers:

Adler, David. *The Babe and I*. Harcourt Brace, 1999.
Johnson, D.B. *Henry Hikes to Fitchburg*. Houghton Mifflin, 2000.
Woodson, Jacqueline. *The Other Side*. Putnam, 2000.

Eva Mitnick,
Los Angeles Public Library

MEET THE AUTHOR

Recently, I had the pleasure to host author David Schwartz at the San Leandro Public Library. Best known for How

Much is a Million? and G is for Google, Schwartz doesn't just write fun math stories (although you will see lots of numbers in the following interview!) but also picture books and science books. He enthralled nearly 700 students at his library visit which was divided into two assemblies. Second and third grade teachers brought their students for National Library Week (in November), and he was a huge success. For information on hosting David Schwartz at your library, visit his website at www.davidschwartz.com

San Leandro Public Library

BRIEFINGS

California Library Association
Children's and Young Adult
Services Section
Penny Peck and Marie Carlsson, Editors
68 Via Matero
San Lorenzo, CA 94580

Now, on to the interview.

How many schools/libraries do you visit on average per year?

Probably about 60 schools and four or five public libraries per year. I figure if I reach an average of 500 kids per school and 100 per library, that's over 30,000 children per year!

How many books have you written?

Number 49 is coming out in March. It's called Millions to Measure and it's a continuation of the series begun in the '80s with Steven Kellogg (who is illustrating this one) and then stalled after my first two books (How Much Is a Million? and If You Made a Million). This will be the third, and I hope there will be many more. This book is more about measuring than it is about millions, but the publisher wanted "Million" in the title for continuity.

What was your favorite subject in school?

The two "M's"--Math and Music! Well, two M's and an S--Math, Music and Science. And you know what? They all go together, as I wrote in my most recently published book (to date), Q Is for Quark: A Science Alphabet Book.

Why do you think so many kids hate math?

I don't. I find, more and more, that kids love math. When their teachers present it in a way that makes it concrete and meaningful, they enjoy it immensely. Sometimes they start out loving math and then in the intermediate or middle school grades, their enthusiasm sours. I have tried to reach kids of that age with my book G Is for Google and some of the concepts in If You Hopped Like a Frog -- and in my presentations. I have tried to get them to see that math is not only everywhere in our lives, but that it is a useful and enjoyable tool we can use to understand and appreciate so many aspects of our world.

Incidentally, I am working on a book for parents about helping their children find the hidden math moments in everyday family life.

Thank you, David Schwartz, for taking the time to "talk" to our *Briefings* audience.

Penny Peck,