



**2012  
Jefferson Cup**

**AWARD**

**U.S. HISTORY  
HISTORICAL FICTION  
BIOGRAPHY**

*Presented by  
Youth Services Forum  
of the Virginia Library Association*



## JUVENILE

### Balloons over Broadway

by **Melissa Sweet. Houghton Mifflin, 2011. Ages 4 and up.**

Ever wondered how the Macy's Thanksgiving Parade got started? Well, wonder no more! Meet Tony Sarg, a little boy from England who had a love for figuring out how things moved from a very early age in life. It was this interest that caused Tony to later develop a love for marionettes and, when Sarg grew up, he began to make puppets and began performing with them on Broadway in New York City. Macy's department store heard about Sarg's puppets and asked him to design some puppets for their store's holiday window, which was known as "Macy's Wondertown." Soon, Macy's owners decided they wanted to put on a parade to honor the many immigrants who worked for the store with the help of Sarg, who was also an immigrant himself. On Thanksgiving Day, 1924 the first ever Macy's Thanksgiving Parade was had with costumes, handmade floats, zoo animals, and puppets made by Sarg. The parade was such a success they decided to do it every year, eventually replacing the zoo animals with Sarg's now world famous helium-filled balloons that took years to get just right.

In this Caldecott Honor Winner book, the author, Melissa Sweet, takes the true Story of the Puppeteer of Macy's Parade and uses colorful watercolor paintings and mixed media collage to bring this story to life. Using clear but charming text, Sweet explains the various versions of puppets and balloons Sarg made for the parade, each better than the last, until finally creating the helium-filled balloons we see today. Sweet explores the legacy of a creative, fun-loving man who had a great love for figuring out how things moved.

### HONOR BOOKS

#### City of Orphans

by **Avi. Atheneum, 2011. Grades 5 and up.**

*City of Orphans* is a wonderfully written historical novel set in 1893 in New York City's Lower East Side. Newsboy Maks, 13, is hungry most of the time, while making only eight cents a day on the streets selling his papers. Maks's sister Agnes has TB, the shoe factory where Agnes and Maks father work is suspending operations, and the rent needs to be paid. Then Maks's oldest sister, Emma, is accused of stealing from a guest at the Waldorf Hotel, where she is a maid. In the midst of family struggles Maks also has to deal with Bruno, the leader of the awful Plug Ugly Gang. He is out to get Maks and orders his crew of bullies to track him down. Luckily for Maks, he is saved by a new friend Willa. Maks brings Willa home and soon she becomes part of their family. Maks and Willa work together to prove Emma's innocence. With some help, they connect the theft to a small-time gangster, who happens to be Willa's absent father.

Avi brings to life the sights and sounds of the New York streets during these rough times. With the narrator speaking directly to the reader, the colorful accurate language of the times as well as

accurate dialogue creates an authentic experience for the reader. Avi merges the multiple characters together wonderfully and creates an intriguing and far from predictable storyline.

Avi takes the time to explain the history in the authors notes which is a must read addition to the story.

### Belle, the Last Mule at Gee's Bend

by **Calvin Alexander Ramsey. Candlewick, 2011. Ages 5 and up.**

Alex "was curious and there was nothing else to do," so listening to an old lady's story is better than just sitting on a hot day. After all, he is a bit curious about how some old mule could be called a hero. Thus begins a new twist on the life of Dr. Martin Luther King as well as the community now known for its quilts. In an effort to stop poorer African-Americans from voting, people had closed down the ferry that would take them to the polls. Instead of giving up they took a long detour in wagons pulled by mules, facing down those who would stop them. So when Dr. King was killed, Belle and Ada were chosen to pull his coffin. Calvin Ramsay and Bettye Stroud's impacting text and natural dialog pull readers into the story. John Holyfield's bright acrylic paintings add life and strength to the words. An author's note with a photo of Belle and Ada pulling Dr. King's coffin convey the reality of the events. This picture book is a new, lovely way to lead into a discussion of Civil Rights Movement and social justice.

### SERIES WORTHY OF NOTE

#### Actual Times

**Published by Flash Point. Grades 1-5.**

The 2011 entries to this series include *Gold! Gold from the American River!* and *America Is Under Attack*. These two non-fiction books cover the California Gold Rush and the September 11th attacks. Each book selected several persons involved in the history and told their stories against the background of the events. In *America Is Under Attack* you meet rescue workers, firefighters, and employees from the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. In *Gold* you meet prospectors such as John and Daniel Murphy. The format is concise and informative, not sparing of detail, but careful to keep the action from being gruesome. The watercolor illustrations convey emotions and context that beautifully supplement the text. These books handle difficult subjects in a way that help children understand.

The entries for 2011 were: *America is Under Attack: September 11, 2001: The Day the Towers Fell* and *Gold! Gold from the American River! January 24, 1848: The Day the Gold Rush Began*.

Other Titles in the Series: *Let it Begin Here! April 19, 1775: The Day the American Revolution Began* and *All Stations! Distress! April 15, 1912: The Day the Titanic Sank*.



## YOUNG ADULT

### Okay for Now

by Gary Schmidt. Clarion Books, 2011. Grades 7 and up.

The talented author Gary Schmidt delivers yet another wonderful story in this coming-of-age tale that manages to be both heart-breaking and hopeful. Schmidt weaves the tale of Doug Swieteck, an 8<sup>th</sup> grader with a very unhappy life at home. Early in the story, Doug's family relocates to a small town where his father has accepted work. His father is an abusive alcoholic and has scarred his family both physically and emotionally. On top of that, Doug feels the constant pressure of people deciding how he is going to turn out for him, especially in a school where the principal sees him as the little brother of a thug, destined to become the same. The few highlights of his new home are that Doug finds refuge in the library, where a kindhearted librarian spots Doug's potential as an artist, and he meets a girl who becomes a true friend, one who challenges him to become better than what people say he is.

Schmidt is able to sensitively craft a story about a fractured family that starts to put the pieces together in ways that are perhaps a little unexpected. There are moments in this book that will make the reader cry interwoven with moments that will lead to laughter, making it a wonderful story that deserves to be read for years to come.

### HONOR BOOKS

#### Phantoms in the Snow

by Kathleen Benner Duple. Scholastic, 2011. Grades 7–10.

This book should be read on a hot summer day, because it makes the reader really cold! In 1944, Noah Garrett, 15, is sent to live with his uncle in Colorado after his parents' death. Having been raised as a pacifist on a Texas farm, it is shocking to Noah to meet his uncle, a gruff Army officer who trains men for winter warfare on skis in the Rocky Mountains. Here at Camp Hale, the division of soldiers called the Phantoms will soon be shipped out to Italy to face the Germans in the Alps. Realistic characters bring life to the gloomy setting of the story. Each one goes through his own transformation as he wrestles with war. Descriptions of the climate are very effective and life-like. Action-packed, with several twists, the novel is a page-turner. As Noah faces his gripping journey, moving from his training at the camp to the snow-covered peaks of Italy, he learns about friendship, courage, loyalty and family.

*Phantoms in the Snow* is both a historical and military/war novel. Many events of the Tenth Mountain Division are true, as the author's note explains. It is exciting to have a World War II novel about a little-known group of soldiers. With wide appeal, this story is a hit for young readers who can easily identify with the characters, especially Noah.

### Jefferson's Sons

by Kimberly Brubaker Bradley. Dial, 2011. Grades 5–8.

Kimberly Brubaker Bradley gives middle school students an insightful fictionalized account of slavery at Monticello through the voices of three children: his first son with slave Sally Hemings, Beverly; his second son, Madison; and another slave, James. "Master" Jefferson's children got special treatment—better work, better shoes, violin lessons, and freedom at age 21—but they were still slaves and their parentage was an unspoken secret. They were not beaten, nor sold away, nor made to work in the fields. In fact, two of the children were so light-skinned that they could pass for white. Their relationship with their father was unsatisfying, as they were constantly questioning freedom and the meaning of "we hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal."

How does the author make a book about slavery and illegitimate children suitable for middle school readers? Telling the story from a child's perspective, we see the horrors of slavery and the conflicts of issues like "passing" from their viewpoints, making the characters and events believable. Historical fiction at its best, this provocative novel offers its readers new perspective and encourages young people to understand and to think about the many issues dealing with slavery, the true meaning of freedom, and the contradictions involving Thomas Jefferson.

### SERIES WORTHY OF NOTE

#### Captured History

Published by Capstone. Grades 5–9.

A picture's worth a thousand words, and stays with us long after dates and names have faded. Each book in this series uses an iconic photograph from an event as the starting point. The text then delves into historical detail and perspective surrounding the photograph. The book describes not only the events and circumstances around the image, but also some of the artistic and journalistic choices made in the use of the picture. The series continues on to examine the effects of the photograph's publication then and now in how we view important events in our history.

The entries for 2011 were: *Migrant Mother: How a Photograph Defined the Great Depression* and *Little Rock Girl 1957: How a Photograph Changed the Fight for Integration*.

Other Titles in the Series: *Birmingham 1963: How a Photograph Rallied Civil Rights Support*; *Breaker Boys: How a Photograph Changed the Fight for Integration*; *Man on the Moon: How a Photograph Made Anything Seem Possible*; *Raising the Flag: How a Photograph Gave a Nation Hope in Wartime*.



# Our Jefferson Cup Overfloweth

## U.S. HISTORY • HISTORICAL FICTION • BIOGRAPHY

**America is Under Attack** by Don Brown. Flash Point, 2011. (2001) Grades 1–5.

**Basketball Belles** by Sue Macy. Holiday House, 2011. (1896) Grades 2–4.

**Belle, the Last Mule at Gee's Bend** by Calvin Alexander Ramsey. Candlewick, 2011. (1960's) Grades K–3.

**Between Shades of Gray** by Ruta Sepetys. Philomel, 2011. (1941) Grades 8–12.

**Bird in a Box** by Andrea Davis Pinkney. Little, Brown, 2011. (1937–1938) Grades 3–5.

**Bootleg: Murder, Moonshine, and the Lawless Years of Prohibition** by Karen Blumenthal. Flash Point, 2011. (1919–1933) Grades 7–10.

**Caleb's Wars** by David L. Dudley. Clarion Books, 2011. (1944) Grades 9–12.

**City of Orphans** by Avi. Atheneum, 2011. (1893) Grades 5–8.

**Dear America: With the Might of Angels** by Andrea Davis Pinkney. Scholastic, 2011. (1955) Grades 3–5.

**Eddie's War** by Carol Fisher Saller. Namelos, 2011. (1934–1944) Grades 6–10.

**Five 4ths of July** by Pat Hughes. Viking Juvenile, 2011. (1777–1781) Grades 8–12.

**Freedom Stone** by Jeffrey Kluger. Philomel, 2011. (1866) Grades 5–8.

**The Girl is Murder** by Kathryn Miller Haines. Roaring Brook Press, 2011. (1942) Grades 7–10.

**Harry Houdini: The Legend of the World's Greatest Escape Artist** by Janice Weaver. Abrams Books for Young Readers, 2011. (1874–1926) Grades 4–6.

**Hoopskirts, Union Blues, and Confederate Grays: Civil War Fashions from 1861–1865** by Kate Havelin. Twenty First Century Books, 2011. (1861–1865) Grades 6–8.

**IM Pei: Architect of Time, Place, and Purpose** by Jill Rubalcaba. Amazon Children's Publishing, 2011. (1967–1997) Grades 6–12.

**Jefferson's Sons** by Kimberly Brubaker Bradley. Dial, 2011. (early 1800s) Grades 6–9.

**Love Twelve Miles Long** by Glenda Armand. Lee & Low, 2011. (1820's) Grades K–2.

**The Many Faces of George Washington** by Carla Killough McClafferty. Carolrhoda Books, 2011. (1732–2005) Grades 5–8.

**Marching with Aunt Susan** by Claire Rudolf Murphy. Peachtree, 2011. (1896) Grades 1–3.

**Migrant Mother** by Don Nardo. Capstone Press, 2011. (1936) Grades 5–9.

**Mysterious Bones** by Katherine Kirkpatrick. Holiday House, 2011. (1996) Grades 6–9.

**A Nation's Hope** by Matt de la Pena. Dial, 2011. (1938) Grades K–3.

**Phantoms in the Snow** by Kathleen Benner Duble. Scholastic, 2011. (1944) Grades 7–10.

**Queen of the Falls** by Chris Van Allsburg. Houghton Mifflin, 2011. (1901) Grades 3–5.

**Raggin' Jazzin' Rockin'** by Susan VanHecke. Boyds Mills Press, 2011. (1600s–1960s) Grades 6–10.

**Red Bird Sings** by Gina Capaldi and Q.L. Pearce. Millbrook Press, 2011. (1876–1938) Grades 2–4.

**Something to Hold** by Katherine Schlick Noe. Clarion Books, 2011. (1962) Grades 4–7.

**The Town that Fooled the British** by Lisa Papp. Sleeping Bear Press, 2011. (1813) Grades K–2.

**Underground** by Shane W. Evans. Roaring Brook Press, 2011. (1800's) Grades K–2.

**The Unforgettable Season** by Phil Bildner. Putnam Juvenile, 2011. (1941) Grades 3–6.

**War and Watermelon** by Rich Wallace. Viking Juvenile, 2011. (1969) Grades 4–7.

**Wheels of Change** by Sue Macy. National Geographic Children's Books, 2011. (1870's–1900's) Grades 5–8.

**White Water** by Michael S. Bandy. Candlewick, 2011. (1962) Grades K–2.

**The Year We Were Famous** by Carole Estby Dagg. Clarion, 2011. (1896) Grades 6–12.



For information about the award or to submit a nomination, please contact:

**Carol Farmer, 2013 Chair**

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## Eligibility

- The book must be an original work published in the year prior to the selection.
- The book must be about U.S. history, an American person, or fiction that highlights the United States' past, 1492 to the present.
- The author must reside in the United States.
- The book must be published for young people.
- The book must be accurate, informative, well researched, unbiased, literate, and give a clear and interesting picture of America's past.

## Selection

The Jefferson Cup Committee selects the winning book. The committee has nine members: a chairperson selected by the previous year's committee, six individuals representing the six regions in the state, the outgoing chairperson of the Youth Services Forum (YSF), and the outgoing Jefferson Cup Award Committee chairperson.

## 2012 Jefferson Cup Award Committee

Elizabeth Swistock, chair

Helen Hinkle, outgoing chair

Sasha Matthews, outgoing Youth Services Forum chair

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Carol Farmer, Region IV

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