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Dear CLJ Readers:

Welcome to the first issue of 2014. I hope one of your New Year's resolutions has been to read more good books! If so, you will find help within these pages. As usual, we have reviews covering a fine selection of books for all ages.

I also encourage you subscribe to the CLJ blog by visiting <http://www.christianlibraryj.org/blog/>. By subscribing to the CLJ blog, you will receive a review every few days, generally in advance of its appearance in the newsletter. While visiting the CLJ website, you may also view the CLJ Core Collection (a collection of highly recommended titles, both fiction and nonfiction, for the young reader) and find information about becoming a CLJ reviewer, should you feel so led.

We hope you enjoy reading this newsletter as much as we have enjoyed putting it together for you.

In Him,
Angela Walsh, Editor

Picture Books for Small Children

The adventures of little nutbrown hare / Sam McBratney ; [illustrated in the style of Anita Jeram by Andy Wagner and Debbie Tarbett].

Somerville, Mass. : Candlewick Press, 2012.

LCCN 2012938811. ISBN 9780763658960, hardcover, \$16.99.

1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 28 cm. PS-Grade 2.

E Rating: *5

Sam McBratney's celebrated characters are back in *The Adventures of Little Nutbrown Hare*, a collection of four stories featuring the curious rabbit and his father. Each short tale ("The Hiding Tree", "On Cloudy Mountain", "The Far Field", and "Coming Home") puts Little Nutbrown Hare into a situation where he explores and learns under the watchful eye of Big Nutbrown Hare.

With the same gentleness as his best-selling classic *Guess How Much I Love You*, Sam McBratney has created an expanded masterpiece for children. There is a simple, soothing tone in his writing that makes these stories perfect for reading aloud to young children. Wonderful values are portrayed in the tender relationship between Little Nutbrown Hare and Big Nutbrown Hare: trust, respect, appreciation, obedience, empathy, and love. The delicate ink and watercolor illustrations capture the emotions and antics of the adorable Little Nutbrown Hare as well as the attentive playfulness of his father. *The Adventures of Little Nutbrown Hare* would be an enduring gift for a child, likely to become a bedtime staple and a family favorite.

Nina Ditmar, CLJ

Fiction for Children

Rock Harbor lost and found / by Colleen Coble ; with Robin Carroll. (Rock Harbor Search and Rescue series ; 2)

Nashville, TN : Thomas Nelson, 2013.

LCCN 2013014704. ISBN 9781400321636, paperback, \$9.99.

241 p. ; 22 cm. Grades 4-6.

Fic Rating: 5

Award-winning author Colleen Coble and Robin Carroll return with the second book in the Rock Harbor series for younger readers. This mystery series features a rescue dog named Sherlock and fourteen-year-old Emily.

In *Rock Harbor Lost and Found*, Emily and her best friend look through old photos in preparation for a surprise anniversary party for Olivia's parents. They discover an old photo that reveals Olivia was adopted as a baby – something she had never known. Afraid to ask her parents about the details, Olivia convinces Emily to help her research the details by contacting a newspaper reporter who helped them in the past. When they start to uncover some information surrounding Olivia's birth family, they come across suspicious and illegal activities that may be related to her adoption.

Then unusual events start taking place in Rock Harbor, Michigan, including the poisoning of Charley (another search-and-rescue dog), the re-appearance of Marika (Emily's mother out on parole), a mysterious fire in the school, and finally, the disappearance of Naomi (Emily's stepmother). Emily launches her own search-and-rescue mission in a snowstorm with the help of her puppy, Sherlock. Will she find Naomi before the blizzard gets worse? Will Olivia learn the truth about her adoption? Have the girls taken on more than they can handle?

Coble and Carroll do an excellent job of creating a good clean mystery/suspense story appropriate for upper elementary readers. Readers will appreciate the plot twists, suspense, and realistic narrative. This is a mystery with a light faith element—Emily prays to God for guidance and learns about forgiveness as she deals with her mother, Marika. The series is clearly appropriate for tween girls and an enjoyable read for older readers, even adults.

Highly recommended for school libraries and youth collections in public libraries.

Carol R. Gehringer, www.worthy2read.wordpress.com

Call me Oklahoma! / Miriam Glassman.

New York : Holiday House, 2013.

LCCN 2012023971. ISBN 9780823427420, hardcover, \$16.95.

123 p. : ill. ; 22 cm. Grades 2-5.

Fic Rating: 3

Aiming for a bold and confident image, nine-year-old Paige Turner renames herself "Oklahoma". With mixed support for the change at home and school, Paige tackles fourth grade problems such as stage fright, bullying, and shifting friendships, learning a lot about herself along the way.

Call Me Oklahoma! is a cute story with a likeable heroine. Miriam Glassman combines humorous dialogue and whimsical sketches to introduce young readers to a plucky girl with fears and challenges

that will be familiar to a grade school audience. There are good messages about loyalty, self-respect, and recognizing and dealing with a bully.

Nina Ditmar, CLJ

Nonfiction for Children

Look up! : bird-watching in your own backyard / Annette LeBlanc Cate.

Somerville, Mass. : Candlewick Press, 2013.

LCCN 2012942416. ISBN 9780763645618, hardcover, \$15.99.

51 p. : col. ill., col. maps ; 20 x 24 cm. Grades 3-7.

598 Rating: 5

Look Up! Bird-Watching in Your Own Backyard invites readers everywhere to notice, observe, and appreciate the myriad of birds, their characteristics, and habitats.

Author/illustrator Annette Leblanc Cate imbues her birds with such personality that her book feels truly interactive. Whimsical cartoons and witty speech bubbles work alongside realistic drawings and factual information to capture the interest and curiosity of birdwatchers of all ages and experience. Filled with color and detail, each page is a delightful jumble of birds chattering away about their traits and educating young readers in the process. The clever topic headings (“To You It’s Vacation; to Us It’s Migration!”) and fittingly titled information boxes (“Foot Note”, “Wing Tip”, “Be a Birdbrain”) add to the imaginative quality of this fun picture book. There are helpful suggestions for novice birdwatchers and an emphasis on the value of sketching and taking notes. The longer text areas offer greater depth for older readers, and there is a bibliography for further reference.

Nina Ditmar, CLJ

Adventure Bible handbook : a wild ride through the Bible / Robin Schmitt & David Frees ; [illustrations, Craig Philips].

Grand Rapids, Mich. : Zonderkidz, 2013.

ISBN 9780310725756, hardcover, \$16.99.

240 p. : col. ill., col. maps ; 23 cm. Grades 3-5.

220 Rating: 3

Four children time travel through the Holy Land in search of their missing archeologist father. Along the way, they witness biblical events and learn about Jesus Christ. *Adventure Bible Handbook* uses a graphic novel format combined with text, photos, and artwork reproductions to introduce and summarize books of the Bible.

The story of four children looking for their earthly father is secondary to their more important discovery of their heavenly father. Robin Schmitt and David Frees’s *Adventure Bible Handbook* offers a good review of biblical events and has a helpful reading guide and index, along with some wonderful photographs of the Holy Land. The wisecracking cartoon characters with their speech-bubble banter and secret device (“Really Smart Phones”) are intended to appeal to younger readers; older readers may find them distracting. Scripture references are from the NIV.

Nina Ditmar, CLJ

Stephen Biesty's cross-sections castle / illustrated by Stephen Biesty ; written by Richard Platt.

New York : DK Pub., 2013.

LCCN 2012533328. ISBN 9781465408808, hardcover, \$17.99.

52 p. : ill. ; 31 cm. Grades 4-7.

623.19 Rating: 5

Stephen Biesty's Cross-Sections Castle introduces the architecture, construction, and inhabitants of a medieval castle in a large picture book format.

Illustrator Stephen Biesty's impressively detailed cross-section views of a castle are the most notable feature in the book; however, his "blow-ups" of people, tools, armor, and activities, and the informative text by Richard Platt, are equally captivating. Each busy two-page spread covers a different aspect of a 14th century castle, such as "Preparing for Attack", "Entertainment", and "Noble Family". Informal headings, use of varied fonts, sidebars, and photographs combine for a very visually appealing book that will engage both student and adult readers. The glossary itself is a wonderful collection of unusual vocabulary words, and there is an added challenge of finding the hidden enemy spy within the scenes. There are pictures of weapons (crossbows and swords) and a very brief description of tortuous punishment for criminals.

Nina Ditmar, CLJ

Fiction for Young Adults

Soldier dog / Sam Angus.

New York : Feiwel and Friends, 2013.

LCCN 2012285893. ISBN 9781250018649, hardcover, \$16.99.

249 p. ; 22 cm. Grades 7-9.

Fic Rating: 5

In *Soldier Dog*, fourteen-year-old Stanley Ryder is scared of his volatile father and desperately misses his brother, a soldier in the army. His father's emotional instability worsens after their champion greyhound mates with a mongrel. When the puppies are six weeks old, his father gets rid of all but one of them, which he threatens to drown. After the puppy disappears, Stanley runs away and joins the army. He volunteers for the Messenger Dog Service, a service that sends a dog and its trainer to the front line trenches. War life is not easy for Stanley, who is emotionally unprepared for it.

Sam Angus vividly illustrates not only the physical and psychological traumas experienced by soldiers during war but also the perilous conditions faced by dogs in their devoted efforts to accomplish the vital mission of carrying messages between the battalion's companies.

Scattered throughout the text are letters written in cursive, which are instrumental in helping Stanley decide whether to go home or stay and fulfill his duties. The book includes a historical note about the British Messenger Dog Service and a photo gallery.

Soldier Dog is a poignant, realistic fiction story about World War I and messenger war dogs.

Dianne Woodman, CLJ

The quilt walk / by Sandra Dallas.

Ann Arbor, MI : Sleeping Bear Press, 2012.

LCCN 2012005863. ISBN 9781585368006, paperback, \$9.95.

213 p. ; 21 cm. Grades 4-7.

Fic Rating: 5

In *The Quilt Walk* by Sandra Dallas, Pa returns home, after nearly a year's absence, with dreams of selling the family farm and moving out West. He plans to build a business block to provide supplies for gold prospectors. Ten-year-old Emmy Blue is sad to leave friends, grandparents, and her cat behind, but is excited about the adventures ahead. Making room for the necessary building materials means there is barely enough room for food, and Emmy and Ma must wear any clothes they intend to bring. Emmy, who prefers playing marbles to sewing, is disappointed by Grandma's parting gift of fabric pieces, needle, and thread, but grows to love walking alongside the wagons and quilting. Emmy's trail adventures include almost losing a friend to snakebite, gaining a loyal, if scraggly, dog, helping a trail widow care for her young children, and befriending a young bride in an abusive marriage.

The Quilt Walk by Sandra Dallas is an historical fiction novel about a young girl who leaves the Illinois farmlands with her family in a wagon train headed for the wild western town of Golden, Colorado. Based on *The Quilt That Walked to Golden*, Dallas's adult nonfiction book about a young girl and her family travelling by wagon train from Ohio to Colorado, *The Quilt Walk* shows the hardships and uncertainties of wagon travel in the 1860's through young Emmy's eyes. In this age-appropriate, character driven story, the engaging protagonist is well developed and solidly placed amid supporting characters, untamed scenery, and historical events. Hardships are treated with respect, but not overdone.

Kim Harris, CLJ

Fire prophet / Jerel Law. (Son of angels: Jonah Stone ; 2)

Nashville, TN : Thomas Nelson, 2012.

LCCN 2012010659. ISBN 9781400318452, paperback, \$9.99.

257 p. ; 21 cm. Grades 4-8.

Fic Rating: 4

Shadow chaser / Jerel Law. (Son of angels: Jonah Stone ; 3)

Nashville, TN : Thomas Nelson, 2013.

LCCN 2012046607. ISBN 9781400321995, paperback, \$9.99.

viii, 221 pages : 22 cm. Grades 4-8.

Fic Rating: 4

Truth runner / Jerel Law. (Son of angels: Jonah Stone ; 4)

Nashville, TN : Thomas Nelson, 2013.

LCCN 2013020908. ISBN 9781400322879, paperback, \$9.99.

xi, 257 p. ; 22 cm. Grades 4-8.

Fic Rating: 4

Jerel Law continues his Jonah Stone: Son of Angels series (a spiritual fantasy aimed at younger readers) with *Fire Prophet*, *Shadow Chaser*, and *Truth Runner*. In each book, Jonah and his siblings join the battle

between the supernatural forces of good (angels) and evil (fallen angels). As children of a nephilim (see Genesis 6:4), they are uniquely qualified to join in this battle, but to do so will cost them.

Fire Prophet takes place one year after thirteen-year-old Jonah and his sister discover they are quarterlings (one-quarter angels; their mother was part human, part fallen angel). This gives them unique powers to fight in the spiritual realm. Jonah and Eliza undergo training to help them discover and understand their own spiritual gifts. They use them to rescue a prophet held captive by the fallen angels. The prophet holds the key to winning the battle between good and evil. Will they rescue the prophet in time?

In *Shadow Chaser*, Jonah's little brother Jeremiah joins his siblings and other children of nephilim at the Angel School. Here they learn how their special powers can be used against the fallen angels and their supernatural forces. But things are getting difficult for Jonah as he experiences some of the trials of a modern-day Job (from the Old Testament). Will he be able to withstand his trials as they affect his health, his possessions, his relationships, and even his strength—or will he lose his faith in his toughest personal battle?

In *Truth Runner*, the story picks up six months after Jonah's grief has caused him to run from Angel School, leaving Eliza and Jeremiah behind. He turns his back on them, runs home, and tries to fit in as a "normal" teen, but it isn't working. Everywhere he goes, he sees the clash between good and evil. Although he tries to ignore the spiritual realm, he can still see the fallen angels and the evil they create, especially with his friends. Will he choose to ignore the battle around him or remember his calling and fight?

Law spins an epic fantasy to delight younger readers, who will be thrilled with this epic adventure where spiritual warfare takes on a new meaning. His books are inspired by Genesis 6:4 and other stories in the Old Testament. Readers will be caught up in this action-adventure taking place on the streets of New York and in the hidden realm.

Recommended for school libraries and public libraries. Law's fantasy series will appeal to readers of other action-adventure series.

Carol R. Gehringer, CLJ

One realm beyond / Donita K. Paul. (The realm walkers trilogy ; 1)

Grand Rapids, Mich. : Zondervan, 2014.

ISBN 9780310735809, paperback, \$12.99.

414 p. ; 21 cm. Grades 6-10.

Fic Rating: 4

Donita K. Paul returns with a new fantasy series aimed at middle school readers, filled with unforgettable characters (both human and dragon) in a battle of good vs. evil.

In *One Realm Beyond*, Cantor d'Ahma has trained with an elderly mentor for the past twenty years. He is finally ready to begin his role as a realm walker, a protector, and defender of the realms. His first step: find his dragon constant, but he is unprepared to bond with the first dragon he meets, especially since Bridger appears so inadequate. Cantor befriends Bixby, a female realm walker trainee with colorful clothing and crowns. Cantor's next assignment is to uncover the secrets of a corrupt Realm Walkers Guild and stop them before it is too late. Together they use their gifts to discover who can and cannot be trusted within the Guild.

Paul is an accomplished storyteller, taking her time to create a world where dragons are constants (similar to sidekicks for superheroes), special gifts enable humans to perform their duties as realm walkers, and where good vs. evil is fought on a regular basis. The realms are the different worlds with portals that realm walkers use to travel between them.

Though it starts out slowly, *One Realm Beyond* engages the reader in the struggle facing Cantor as he progresses in his skills and puts his training to use. Bixby is an endearing character with her quirky ways, and Bridger appears an inept dragon when in fact, his gifts are equally important to Cantor. *One Realm Beyond* ends a bit abruptly and with a cliffhanger, but that may be a result of being book one in a trilogy.

Recommended for public libraries and school collections. Fans of Donita Paul's earlier series and fantasy fans will not be disappointed!

Carol R. Gehringer, worthy2read.wordpress.com

Outcasts / Jill Williamson. (The safe lands ; 2)

Grand Rapids, Mich. : Zondervan, 2013.

LCCN 2013033153. ISBN 9780310724247, paperback, \$9.99.

407 p. ; 21 cm. Grades 9-12.

Fic Rating: 5

Award-winning author Jill Williamson returns with *Outcasts*, the second book in The Safe Lands series, picking up where *Captives* left off. The three teen brothers make decisions how they will live in a land that is not their own, one where pleasure is valued more than human life, a land that makes it difficult to stay true to their faith in the face of so many temptations.

In *Outcasts*, three brothers grow up and try to adjust to the mantle of leadership thrust upon them following the death of their elders as the villagers were captured. Each one makes a decision that affects the other captives. Omar becomes a vigilante to compensate for his earlier betrayal of his people, Mason works to find a cure for the disease afflicting native residents of the Safe Lands, and Levi focuses on a way to free the remaining captives from their homeland. Relationships are affected by choices made by each brother. Will their actions lead to their death?

Williamson, a gifted storyteller, does a remarkable job in creating a believable futuristic world where believers are endangered and life without God is empty. A rich narrative, both plot and character-driven, *Outcasts* manages to avoid the second-book pitfalls; it is more than a bridge between book 1 and book 3. *Captives* lays the groundwork for *Outcasts*, but *Outcasts* is the better book, and Williamson is to be congratulated on creating a page-turner and making the reader eager for the final installment.

Recommended for school and public libraries.

Carol R. Gehringer, worthy2read.wordpress.com

Non-Fiction for Young Adults

Dietrich Bonhoeffer : in the midst of wickedness / Janet Benge, Geoff Benge. (Christian heroes, then & now)

Seattle : YWAM, 2012.

LCCN 2012006860. ISBN 9781576587133, paperback, \$8.99.

207 p. : map ; 21 cm. Grades 5-8.

B Rating: 4

Dietrich Bonhoeffer: In the Midst of Wickedness by Janet & Geoff Benge is a biography included in the “Christian Heroes: Then & Now” series. As a child, Dietrich lived with his family in financial comfort. This all changed on August 1, 1914 when Germany declared war on Russia. As the war continued, food became scarce; two of Dietrich’s brothers were called to war, where one died. Dietrich studied to be a theologian. However, as Adolf Hitler came into power, Dietrich knew that Hitler had to be stopped. Dietrich met secretly with family members and friends to discuss plans for stopping Hitler. They couldn’t understand how he could have so much power when he was doing so much wrong. Dietrich kept in contact with Protestant leaders outside of Germany and the World Council of Churches to keep them informed of Hitler’s doings. When Hitler learned of Dietrich’s actions, he arrested all that were involved. In July 1943, Dietrich was arrested and sent to prison. On April 9, 1945, along with five other men, he was found guilty and received a death sentence. Two weeks after the hanging, American troops liberated the concentration camp.

Hitler had an army of thousands and was very powerful. Dietrich and his co-conspirators knew that it would be very difficult to stop Hitler, but they knew that they had to try. His determination is reflected throughout the story. Hitler’s reign was a horrible time when unimaginable things took place. This book mentions murder plots, Hitler’s suicide, imprisonment, death sentences, and Hitler’s plans; however, there is nothing graphic. The book is written so that readers in middle school and above would be able to understand and follow the history of Dietrich Bonhoeffer. The lesson of Dietrich’s life story is summed up in this quote: “Not to speak is to speak. Not to act is to act”.

Trina Chase, CLJ

Francis Asbury : circuit rider / Janet and Geoff Benge. (Christian heroes, then & now)

Seattle : YWAM, 2013.

LCCN 2012048821. ISBN 9781576587379, paperback, \$8.99.

189 p. : map ; 21 cm. Grades 5-8.

B Rating: 4

Francis Asbury: Circuit Rider by Janet & Geoff Benge is a biography included in the “Christian Heroes: Then & Now” series. Francis Asbury knows he has a higher calling than being a buckle maker in England. He decides to become a traveling Methodist preacher. He feels this is God’s plan for him. And God was telling him to travel to the American colonies to preach the word of God.

Asbury becomes one of the first Methodist preachers in America. He travels over thousands of miles on horseback to bring the Gospel to the American settlers. Most of the settlers welcome him into their homes and help with his supplies. It is dangerous at times because of the conflicts between the British and the American colonies. When other preachers flee during the Revolutionary War, Francis is determined to remain in America, knowing it is God’s plan for him. Francis does not allow his English

origins to affect his feelings about the American people. He wants everyone to hear about God-whether from him or another circuit rider. Even when sick, Francis reaches out to the settlers to preach and teach them God's word.

The authors capture the determination and faith of Francis in his works. He led a long life following his calling and was held in high regard by his congregations. Francis kept journals recording his travels and feelings, and there are journal excerpts throughout the book to give the reader a look into Francis's thoughts. There is mention of war and slavery in the book, but there is nothing graphic. The book is written so that middle school and above would be able to understand and follow the history of Francis Asbury.

Trina Chase, CLJ

The true account of Adam and Eve / Ken Ham.

Green Forest, AR : Master Books, 2012.

LCCN 2012943105. ISBN 9780890516706, hardcover, \$15.99.

56 p. : col. ill. ; 21 x 26 cm. Grades 5-10 (HS, Adult).

222 Rating: 5

The True Account of Adam and Eve by Ken Ham tells the true story of the world's first two people, Adam and Eve. The book begins with a summary of the six days of Creation, but provides more detail about the creation of Adam and Eve. God tests Adam's obedience with the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. When Satan tricks Eve into eating from this tree, eternity changes—sin enters the world, and death follows. Sin affects everything in the universe. Even though Adam destroys his perfect relationship with God, there is still hope for salvation, and this comes in the form of Jesus Christ. God's own Son sacrifices himself to pay for our sins. This book explains that, while many try to discredit God's word with talk of evolution and our world being millions or billions of years old, God created everything only around 6000 years ago.

The author does a great job detailing the creation of the universe and people. It is very well-written and easy to understand. The illustrations are beautiful and also help tell the story. The sequence of events is clearly documented to show doubters that this is the true story of Adam, Eve, and the creation of our world. The book also tells how Jesus died for our sins and how we can receive salvation through Him. Throughout the book, there are references to Bible verses and how the Bible is important for faith. This book tells a story different from what most have heard and contends that the secular accounts cannot possibly be true. As Adam is actually mentioned in nine different books of the Bible, the book concludes with Scripture passages about Adam.

Trina Chase, CLJ

Raising Cain : how the Bible shapes the things you say / Wayne Harvey.

Nashville, TN : Holman Reference, 2013.

LCCN 2012286546. ISBN 9780805495928, paperback, \$9.99.

vi, 506 p. : ill. ; 17 cm. Grades 10-12 (Adult).

220.5203 Rating: 4

Raising Cain: How the Bible Shapes the Things You Say comprises over 900 expressions that include allusions, idioms, and sayings. The book is split into alphabetical sections, each introduced with an amusing black and white cartoon drawing. A specific format is followed for each expression: Term, Means, Biblical Text, and Example of Use. The biblical verse(s) are quoted predominately from the KJV,

and only a couple of the terms do not include any verse(s). Each term's usage is illustrated with non-religious writings from the late 1990s or early 2000s. In some instances, the biblical meaning of a term and the contemporary meaning do not correlate.

Wayne Harvey has written a book that provides an abundant amount of useful and fascinating information to anyone interested in delving deeper into the Bible. Readers will gain insights into how the Bible continues to have an impact on the English language. *Raising Cain* can be utilized as a reference tool or study aid, but it would have been easier to use had an index been included so that readers can readily locate terms that include certain words or that relate to specific idioms, allusions, and sayings.

Dianne Woodman, CLJ

Similes dictionary / Elyse Sommer.

Canton, MI : Visible Ink Press, 2013.

LCCN 2013000154. ISBN 9781578594337, library, \$29.95.

625 pages ; 25 cm. Adult (Grades 10-12).

428.1 Rating: 4

The second edition of the *Similes Dictionary* by Elyse Sommer is a collection of quotations and colloquialisms that combines dissimilar objects and ideas to form fresh visual perspectives. Examples of quotes include:

Beauty – beautiful and freckled as a tiger lily – O. Henry, 'The Voice of the City' (The Complete Works of O. Henry), 1926. (p. 82); she walks in beauty like the night – Lord Byron (p. 83)

Problems and Solutions – as rust eats iron, so care eats the heart – Auguste Ricard (p. 408); The problem stayed in front of his mind like a sheer cliff he could not begin to climb – Ken Follett (p. 409)

Sources cited include the Bible, ancient philosophies, writers, musicians, and lines from popular movie and television shows. Organized by subject headings, the comprehensive table of thematic contents assists readers in quickly locating topics that range from abandonment to God, pensiveness to zeal, and everything in-between. "See" and "See also" references direct readers to alternate supporting topics. For example, the topical listing for "God" includes "See: Forgiveness, Religion." The listing for "Landscapes" includes "See Also: Mountains; Nature; Ponds, rivers and streams; Road scenes; Trees." A comprehensive author's index includes famous names spanning Aesop to Woodrow Wilson, Plato to Paul Neman, and Joyce Carol Oates to Emile Zola.

Although the introduction contains minor typographical errors, they do not detract from the overall work. Subjects like "Bigotry," "Lust," "Sexual Interaction," and "Vulgarity" are handled with dignity, but remind the reader that this resource is best utilized by older students to adults. This could be a useful tool for writers, public speakers, and those who just need an occasional creative communication spark.

Kim Harris, CLJ

Chronicles of dinosauria : the history & mystery of dinosuars and man / Dave Woetzel, Richard Dobbs.

Green Forest, AR : Master Books, 2013.

LCCN 2012956094. ISBN 9780890517048, hardcover, \$16.99.

84 p. : col. ill. ; 29 cm. Grades 5-8 (HS, Adult).

567.9 Rating: 4

Chronicles of Dinosauria: The History & Mystery of Dinosaurs and Man by Dave Woetzel is a beautifully illustrated explanation of the coexistence of dinosaurs and man . There is much controversy about this subject. Woetzel uses Scripture to provide evidence that this coexistence occurred. According to Genesis, "God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good" (Genesis 1:31). Since this would include dinosaurs, Woetzel believes that dinosaurs were created as gentle, plant-eating creatures. When Adam and Eve sinned, the curse affected all creation—including dinosaurs. Evolutionists say that dinosaurs died about 60 million years ago—long before man evolved. However, there is fossil evidence that contradicts this theory. Artwork has also been found depicting man and dinosaurs. Woetzel uses the words "dragon" and "dinosaur" interchangeably and says that the word "dragon" appears in the Old Testament 22 times.

There are many theories regarding dinosaurs and man. This book challenges the credibility of evolutionist thought on the subject. The illustrations are beautiful and help readers to picture the history described in its pages. The author uses scriptural support to validate his theories. Dinosaurs are mysterious and interesting to people, young and old, and their creation and extinction are particularly intriguing topics. *Chronicles of Dinosauria* discusses different types of dinosaurs and their relationship to current creatures. Included are photographs of artwork and fossils depicting humans and dinosaurs together. Chapter 7 ("Biblical Evidence of Dinosaurs and Man") provides examples of how these creatures appear in the Bible. *Chronicles of Dinosauria* posits that, while scientists may seem to have compelling evidence in support of evolutionary theory, Christians must also consider evidence in the Bible that contradicts this theory.

Trina Chase, CLJ

Fiction for Adults

Glamorous illusions / Lisa T. Bergren. (The grand tour series ; 1)

Colorado Springs : David C. Cook, 2012.

LCCN 2012935339. ISBN 9781434764300, paperback, \$14.99.

413 p. ; 21 cm. Adult.

Fic Rating: 3

Grave consequences / Lisa T. Bergren. (The grand tour series ; 2)

Colorado Springs : David C. Cook, 2013.

LCCN 2012955795. ISBN 9781434764324, paperback, \$14.99.

443 p. ; 21 cm. Adult.

Fic Rating: 3

Lisa T. Bergren presents her Grand Tour series, featuring Cora, a poor girl from Montana who discovers she is the illegitimate daughter of a wealthy man. As she travels with her new family in 1913 Europe, she uncovers more than she expects in herself and those around her.

In *Glamorous Illusions*, Cora Diehl returns home after her first year of teacher training and finds her father having a stroke. As her father lies dying and the prospect of losing the farm becomes real, Cora learns her parents have hid a secret from her for nineteen years: she is really the daughter of Mr. Kensington, the copper tycoon.

Her biological father helps the Diehls get medical care for her father in exchange for Cora's presence on a tour of Europe with the Kensingtons and their friends. Her parents move to Minnesota for her father's health while Cora's life is changed forever.

In *Grave Consequences*, Cora Kensington reluctantly continues her tour of Europe with her newly discovered siblings. As they travel, an enemy and a new romance put plans in jeopardy. Cora discovers why her biological father wants a relationship with her after ignoring her for nineteen years. What will become of their travel plans now as she stands up to him?

Glamorous Illusions and *Grave Consequences* are filled with adventure, as Cora travels through Europe. Will she succumb to the charms of the dashing Pierre, or will another sweep her off her feet? Will the glamour of her new life be worth the price? Will she discover her faith again and make the right decisions?

Bergren weaves historical fiction with hints of romance and a dash of suspense. Readers enter the world of Edwardian Europe where rich narrative and mostly likeable characters abound. *Glamorous Illusions* ends abruptly with many loose ends. However, *Grave Consequences* continues the story of Cora, wrapping up many of the loose ends, while still leaving some to be answered in the final book, *Glittering Promises*. The faith element is evident but not preachy, as Cora struggles with her decisions and their consequences.

Recommended for public collections and school libraries.

Carol R. Gehringer, CLJ

Glittering promises / Lisa T. Bergren. (The grand tour series ; 3)

Colorado Springs : David C. Cook, 2013.

LCCN 2013946263. ISBN 9781434764287, paperback, \$14.99.

455 p. ; 21 cm. Adult.

Fic Rating: 3

Award-winning author Lisa T. Bergren presents the conclusion to her 1913 Grand Tour series, in which Cora Kensington, America's newest heiress, travels to Europe with her newly discovered siblings and friends. Will she lose herself and her faith as she embraces her new identity?

In *Glittering Promises*, Cora fights to remain true to her roots in the face of relentless pursuit by Pierre de Richelieu, a charming Frenchman. Photojournalists hound her, looking for a good story about America's newest heiress. Meanwhile, someone wants to physically harm her. Has she found her true love in Will, the tour guide, or will Pierre win her heart? How will she embrace her future—after the tour is over?

Bergren's Grand Tour series creates a world one can easily picture. Readers enter the world of Edwardian Europe. Bergren provides likeable characters with rich narrative, making it both character- and plot-driven. Although one could read this final book without reading the earlier ones, the detailed back story leading up to the events in *Glittering Promises* is found in *Glamorous Illusions* and *Grave Consequences*; both are well worth reading.

In *Glittering Promises*, Cora's rags-to-riches journey continues as she discovers who she really is, who she wants to be, and the price involved in each decision. Will it cost her the love of the man she really wants? How will her decision define her future? Cora discovers that "all that glitters isn't gold" as she untangles who truly loves her for herself, who wants to control her and her fortune, and what God wants for her life.

Recommended for public collections and school libraries. It will appeal especially to Edwardian historical fiction fans.

Carol R. Gehringer, worthy2read.wordpress.com

Chasing the wind : a novel / Pamela Binnings Ewen.

Nashville, TN : B&H, 2012.

LCCN 2012288058. ISBN 9780805464313, paperback, \$14.99.

viii, 343 p. ; 22 cm. Adult.

Fic Rating: 4

In *Chasing the Wind* by Pamela Binnings Ewen, Amalise Catoir is an up-and-coming lawyer in one of the most prestigious law firms in New Orleans. Recently widowed from an abusive husband, she feels she has been given a second chance at life. When she is tapped to be part of the legal team for a multi-million dollar real estate deal, it seems like a golden opportunity until she meets a poverty-stricken foster family who will be evicted as a result.

Although occasionally heavy in legal proceedings, the story gives the reader an excellent view of the internal workings of a law firm. Amalise is a strong Christian character without being preachy or Pollyanna-esque—one with whom readers can easily relate.

The author sprinkles real events and cultural references throughout the book to successfully evoke the flavor of Louisiana in the mid-1970's. Although typical of the era, the fact that many of the characters are cigarette smokers could be distasteful to some readers.

Suspense builds slowly in the beginning of the book, but by the middle the pace increases substantially. In addition to providing a satisfying ending, the book successfully handles how Christians can be in the world but not of the world with regard to society's needs, the workplace, and relationships.

Linda Matchett, CLJ

Before the scarlet dawn / Rita Gerlach. (The daughters of the Potomac ; 1)

Nashville, TN : Abingdon Press, 2011.

LCCN 2011041510. ISBN 9781426714146, paperback, \$14.99.

327 p. ; 22 cm. Adult.

Fic Rating: 5

Beside two rivers / Rita Gerlach. (The daughters of the Potomac ; 2)

Nashville, TN : Abingdon Press, 2012.

LCCN 2011051567. ISBN 9781426714153, paperback, \$14.99.

335 p. ; 22 cm. Adult.

Fic Rating: 5

Beyond the valley / Rita Gerlach. (The daughters of the Potomac ; 3)

Nashville, TN : Abingdon Press, 2013.

LCCN 2012043681. ISBN 9781426714160, paperback, \$14.99.

330 p. ; 22 cm. Adult.

Fic Rating: 5

In *Before the Scarlet Dawn*, Eliza Bloome, the daughter of a poor English vicar, falls in love with Hayward Morgan, the heir of the wealthy estate of Havendale. Though attracted to Eliza, Hayward cannot overlook her lowly station, but this does not stop Eliza from hoping and praying that Hayward will choose her as his wife. On the eve of Hayward's secret departure to America, he has a change of heart, believing that Eliza is the answer to his need for a strong wife. Eliza accepts Hayward's offer with the greatest hope that he will come to love her as she loves him. The two are married immediately before setting sail to America. Arriving in Maryland in the summer of 1775, they quickly learn that the hushed whispers of revolution have changed to the shouts of war. Will love grow and survive in this wilderness despite the separation of war?

In *Beside Two Rivers*, Darcy Hayward falls in love with an Englishman who may hold the key to more than just her heart. Meanwhile, she receives an unexpected offer to visit her grandmother in England. There Darcy learns the truth about her mother's death and her father's abandonment.

In *Beyond the Valley*, Sarah Carr becomes a young widow. Soon after, she is taken captive by an evil man who sentences her to life as an indentured servant in the American Colonies. Despite misfortune, tragedy, and danger, Sarah finds love once again, and her faith is only made stronger.

Rita Gerlach's "The Daughters of the Potomac" series is a wonderfully written saga full of romance, intrigue, and deception set against the historical backdrop of the birth of the United States. The first novel lays the foundation for the series with a plot that quickly gets underway. The second novel is really a continuation of the first, and the two should be read in sequence for a full appreciation of the satisfying resolution. Though last in the series, the timeline of the third novel overlaps with that of the first book, adding more details to events that occurred in the first while serving to tell the rest of Sarah's story. All three leading ladies are characters that readers cannot help but love. Eliza's repentant heart, Sarah's determined spirit, and Darcy's innocent nature will capture readers' loyalties and sympathies from the beginning. The romance of each story is poignant and distinct, with their individual trials, joys, and heartaches. Though not explicit or graphic, there are a few sensual references or suggestions in each book that may not be appropriate for young teens. Themes of forgiveness, redemption, and second chances are woven throughout, painting a picture of God's unending grace.

Justina McBride, CLJ

The dancing master / Julie Klassen.

Minneapolis : Bethany House, 2013.

LCCN 2013032378. ISBN 9780764210709, paperback, \$14.99.

424 p. ; 22 cm. Adult.

Fic Rating: 3

Award-winning author Julie Klassen is known for writing Regency novels filled with a sweet romance, entertaining dialogue, and family secrets. In *The Dancing Master*, dancing master Alec Valcourt moves his mother and sister from London to a remote Devonshire village.

He is unaware that wealthy Lady Midwinter prohibits dancing, thus making it hard for him to create a new life by teaching dancing in the village. However, Lady Midwinter hires him as her clerk. In her

employ, he comes into contact with Lady Midwinter's daughter, Julia. She is selfish and flirts with every single man she meets, in her attempt to remedy a cold attitude from her late father. She longs to be free of her dreary village, Beaworthy, and experience a different life. Alec and Julia become unlikely allies as secrets are revealed and past hurts are healed.

Klassen has written some amazing novels, but this one is not as well-written as the others (especially *Silent Governess* and *The Tutor's Daughter*). The dialogue is entertaining, and the characters are well-developed if not very likeable, but the plot moves slowly in the first half of the book. It is told from Alec's point of view, giving it a different spin.

Klassen introduces the reader to a role in Regency life not normally mentioned (the dancing master is also a fencing master!). Each chapter includes quotes about dancing during this era; this adds to the depth of historical details that Klassen is known for in her writing. An author's note about some historical facts and discussion questions are included. Overall, it was an enjoyable read, just not as excellent as her other works.

Recommended for public libraries as well as school libraries.

Carol R. Gehringer, Worthy2Read.wordpress.com

The bridesmaid / Beverly Lewis. (Home to Hickory Hollow ; 2)

Minneapolis : Bethany House, 2012.

LCCN 2012013185. ISBN 9780764209789, paperback, \$14.99.

316 p. ; 23 cm. Adult.
Fic Rating: 4

According to her younger sister Cora Jane, 24-year-old Joanna Kurtz is doomed never to be a bride; after all, being a bridesmaid for the third time does not increase one's chances. However, Joanna has a secret that her sister does not know, a secret even dearer to her heart than the stories she writes in her notebook. That secret is Eben Troyer, the special young man she met in Indiana who captured her heart after they spent three short but wonderful days in each other's company. Separated by a 10-hour drive, they continue their relationship by mail, while Joanna waits and hopes for the day when they can enjoy a typical Amish courtship. However, circumstances arise that threaten to keep Joanna and Eben apart, and Joanna begins to wonder if she will ever be a bride.

In *The Bridesmaid*, Beverly Lewis takes her readers on another stroll through life in the Amish community of Hickory Hollow. Like the first book in this series, the plot develops slowly, effectively mirroring the slower pace of life in this Amish community, while focusing on the main character's growth as she faces the testing and trials of having a younger sister and the heartache of a love that may never be. Joanna is a wonderful role model of Christ-like character, with her patient, obedient, respectful, and forgiving nature -though at times, the reader may wish Joanna were less understanding, especially in regard to her younger sister. Characteristic of a Beverly Lewis novel, the love story is sweet, wholesome, and gentle, a refreshing contrast to mainstream romance novels and movies. The overarching theme of this novel is unwavering faith. Despite personal doubts and the circumstances of life that get in the way, one can always cling to the hope that is in Christ alone, for He is stronger than any doubt or circumstance, and His perfect plan will be accomplished.

Justina McBride, CLJ

The guardian / Beverly Lewis. (Home to Hickory Hollow ; 3)

Minneapolis : Bethany House, 2013.

LCCN 2012040442. ISBN 9780764209796, paperback, \$14.99.

345 p. ; 23 cm. Adult.

Fic Rating: 4

While house-sitting for her cousin in Lancaster County, Jodi Winfield finds a young child bruised, half-dressed, and lying alone in a wooded field. Her teacher heart quickens with concern, and she immediately uses her cell phone to search for any missing person reports. Finding none, she calls her cousin, a cop, but is transferred to voicemail. Just as she begins to dial 911, the little girl wakes up and cries out in a language Jodi thinks might be German. Not able to communicate with the girl, Jodi is at a loss as to what to do. Once, she would have prayed, but Jodi stopped praying a year ago. When her cousin returns her call, Jodi is directed to the Amish Community of Hickory Hollow. For Jodi, Hickory Hollow may hold the key to more than the lost child's identity.

With *The Guardian*, Beverly Lewis revisits the charming community of Hickory Hollow, a place that has become a second home to fans of this Amish series. This addition to the series, however, veers in a slightly different direction. Unlike the first two books, this novel has two female protagonists: Jodi and Maryanna. The lives of these two characters could not be more opposite, as they come from different worlds and are in different chapters of life, making this book appealing to both young and middle-aged adults. Though there is romance, the greater focus of this novel is on Jodi and Maryanna's relationship with one another and ultimately with God. Through their faith, these women represent two contrasting responses to tragedy, as one walks away from God, while the other only clings tighter to the Savior. As in the other books in this series, there is a clear message of God's sovereign work in the lives of His children. The themes that resonate clearly in this novel are those of mourning turned into joy and faith refined by the loving hand of the Heavenly Father.

Justina McBride, CLJ

Deadly devotion : a novel / Sandra Orchard. (Port Aster secrets ; 1)

Grand Rapids, Mich. : Revell, 2013.

LCCN 2013001622. ISBN 9780800722227, paperback, \$14.99.

374 p. ; 22 cm. Adult.

Fic Rating: 4

Research scientists Kate Adams and Daisy Leacock were on the brink of a breakthrough for treating depression with herbal medicine when Daisy is found dead and her death ruled a suicide. Kate badgers Detective Tom Parker, a former FBI agent who has come back to his hometown of Port Aster, to reopen the investigation. Fighting a growing attraction for each other, the pair alternately team up and square off to find Daisy's killer.

Deadly Devotion is a fast-moving book with an interesting plot and good dialogue. Peppered with a wealth of knowledge about flowers, herbs, and pharmaceuticals, the book informs the reader on the topic without sounding stilted or like a textbook. With the exception of the nosy neighbor who just happens to have a much-needed clue, the characters are multi-faceted and believable.

The ending is not tied up in a bow which might leave some readers disappointed, but as a whole the book is an enjoyable whodunit. This is the first of a series that promises entertainment and clean reading.

Linda Matchett, CLJ

An elegant solution / Paul Robertson.

Minneapolis : Bethany House, 2013.

LCCN 2013026767. ISBN 9780764205705, paperback, \$14.99.

427 p. ; 22 cm. Adult.

Fic Rating: *5

Leonhard Euler is a gifted young man who works hard for the Bernoulli family during the morning hours in exchange for precious afternoon hours of tutelage under Master Johann, the great mathematical genius. When Master Johann's two sons, Daniel and Nicolaus, arrive back in town, the tension between father and sons is most evident. Leonhard finds himself in the middle of it all, when Daniel asks for help investigating the death of his Uncle Jacob, the man who held the esteemed Chair of Mathematics before Master Johann. Though hesitant at first, Leonhard agrees to help and begins asking subtle questions around town. No sooner do the Bernoulli brothers arrive back home than a murder occurs, arousing suspicions and inciting finger-pointing. Pulled into a web of suspicion and deceit created by some of the most brilliant minds, Leonard must rely on his own intelligence to find the greatest solution of all.

In *An Elegant Solution*, Paul Robertson takes readers on a journey back in time to 18th century Europe, an era fraught with fear of the Black Death and Inquisitions. With a riveting tale that is plot-driven from the start, the book immediately pulls readers into a world shrouded with secrets and sinister intent. The suspense and mystery of the plot are increased with each turn of the page, and full revelation does not arrive until the final pages. The writing is exquisite and poignant, full of many quotable lines that will leave one reflecting on the complexities and mysteries of life itself. With his innocent and inquisitive nature, Leonhard's character is the light among the darkness that permeates the plot. His piety and reverence for God is sincere, and though this book is not steeped in religious dogma, there are profound truths spoken about humanity, God's sovereignty, and Christ's sacrifice on the cross. This is not a quick, relaxing read, as it demands from its readers an actively engaged mind. Yet such effort is worthwhile, as this is a beautifully written novel that will leave its readers pondering certain truths long after the final sentence is read.

Justina McBride, CLJ