

Rebecca Caudill Young Readers' Book Award 2000 Nominees

Alphabet City Ballet by Erika Tamar

Marisol has always loved to dance—to the salsa at family parties, to the boom boxes on Loisada Avenue. Then she wins a scholarship to ballet school and discovers an inspiring new world of beauty and discipline. But when violence erupts in Alphabet City, Marisol's dream starts to slip away. To keep dancing she must make heartbreaking choices—perhaps impossible ones.

As Long As There Are Mountains by Natalie Kinsey-Warnock

Thirteen-year-old Iris won't give up her family farm in northern Vermont—not without a fight. Unlike her brother, Lucien, who can't wait to get out, Iris feels deeply and happily rooted. Then, tragedy strikes. With a burned-down barn and a father who may be permanently injured, Iris's world topples. If Lucien takes over the farm, it will ruin his dreams of college and being a writer. But if Lucien leaves, Iris's parents will have to sell the property. Will Iris be forced to give up everything she loves?

The Butterfly Lion by Michael Morpurgo

Trying to run away from boarding school in England, a boy encounters an old woman who tells him the story of Bertie and his beautiful white lion.

A Different Kind of Hero by Ann Blakeslee

In 1881 twelve-year-old Renny, who resists his father's efforts to turn him into a rough, tough, brawling boy, earns the disapproval of the entire mining camp when he befriends a newly arrived Chinese boy.

Earthquake Terror by Peg Kehret

After Jonathan's mother breaks her ankle on a family camping trip, Jonathan and his younger sister Abby are left alone on a deserted island. Then a devastating earthquake hits and suddenly, Jonathan and Abby are fighting for their lives.

Ella Enchanted by Gail Carson Levine

At her birth, Ella of Frell was the unfortunate recipient of a foolish fairy's gift--the "gift" of obedience. Ella must obey any order given to her, whether it's hopping on one foot for a day and a half, or chopping off her own head! But strong-willed Ella does not tamely accept her fate. Against a bold backdrop of princes, ogres, giants, wicked stepsisters, and fairy godmothers, Ella goes on a quest to break the curse--once and for all.

Leon's Story by Leon Walter Tillage

Leon Tillage grew up the son of a sharecropper in a small town in North Carolina. Told in vignettes, this is his story about walking four miles to the school for black children, and watching a school bus full of white children go past. It's about his being forced to sit in the balcony at the movie theater, hiding all night when the Klansmen came riding, and worse. Much worse. But it is also the story of a strong family and the love that bound

them together. And, finally, it's about working to change an oppressive existence by joining the civil rights movement. Edited from recorded interviews conducted by Susan L. Roth, Leon's story will stay with readers long after they have finished his powerful account.

Lily's Crossing by Patricia Reilly Giff

Every summer Lily and her father go to her family's house in Rockaway, near the Atlantic Ocean. But the summer of 1944 is different. World War II has called Lily's father overseas, Lily's best friend Margaret had to move with her family to a wartime factory town, and Lily is forced to live with her grandmother. But then a boy named Albert, a refugee from Hungary, comes to live in Rockaway. He has lost most of his family to the war. Soon he and Lily form a special friendship, and they have secrets to share. But they have both told lies, and Lily's lie may cost Albert his life.

Lone Wolf by Kristine Franklin

When a large family moves into the house near where he and his father live in the woods, Perry's friendship with the oldest girl helps him come to terms with his sister's death and his parents' divorce.

Losers, Inc. by Claudia Mills

Ethan and his best friend, Julius, are losers and proud of it. So, they form Losers, Inc., an exclusive club of two. But when a new student teacher arrives, Ethan tries to impress her and finds himself trying not to be a loser. Will Ethan have to resign as vice president of Losers, Inc?

Orphan Train Rider by Andrea Warren

Between 1854 and 1930, more than 200,000 orphaned or abandoned children were sent west on orphan trains to find new homes. Some were adopted by loving families; others were not as fortunate. In recent years, some of the riders have begun to share their stories. Andrea Warren alternates chapters about the history of the orphan trains with the story of Lee Nailling, who in 1926 rode an orphan train to Texas.

P.S. Longer Letter Later by Paula Danziger

If opposites really do attract, this explains why Elizabeth and Tara*Starr are best friends. Not only are their personalities different, but their family backgrounds are a lesson in socio-economic diversity. When Tara*Starr's family moves to another town, the letters that she and Elizabeth write regularly become even more important. Their correspondence chronicles the joys, hopes, fears, and sometimes pain, of two girls coming of age.

Saving Shiloh by Phyllis Reynolds Naylor

Marty Preston wonders why it is that despite Judd Traver's attempts to redeem himself everyone is still so willing to think the worst of him. Marty's friend David is sure that Judd will be named as the murderer of a man who has been missing. Others are sure that Judd is behind a series of burglaries in the area. But Marty's parents and, with some trepidation, Marty himself persist in their attempts to be good neighbors and to give

Judd a second chance. Now that Marty has Shiloh, maybe he can help Judd to take better care of his other dogs. Then again, maybe folks are right -- there's no way a Judd Travers can ever change for the good. Then a terrifying life-or-death situation brings this dilemma into sharp focus.

Seedfolks by Paul Fleischman

A vacant lot, rat-infested and filled with garbage, looked like no place for a garden. Especially to a neighborhood of strangers where no one seems to care. Until one day, a young girl clears a small space and digs into the hard-packed soil to plant her precious bean seeds. Suddenly, the soil holds promise: To Curtis, who believes he can win back Lateesha's heart with a harvest of tomatoes; to Virgil's dad, who sees a fortune to be made from growing lettuce; and even to Maricela, sixteen and pregnant, wishing she were dead. Thirteen very different voices -- old, young, Haitian, Hispanic, tough, haunted, and hopeful -- tell one amazing story about a garden that transforms a neighborhood.

Silverwing by Kenneth Oppel

Shade is a young Silverwing bat, the runt of his colony. But he's determined to prove himself on the long, dangerous winter migration to Hibernaculum, millions of wingbeats to the south. During a fierce storm, he loses the others and soon faces the most incredible journey of his young life. Desperately searching for a way to rejoin his flock, Shade meets a remarkable cast of characters: Marina, a Brightwing bat with a strange metal band on her leg; Zephr, a mystical albino bat with a strange gift; and Goth, a gigantic carnivorous vampire bat. But which ones are friends and which ones are enemies? In this epic story of adventure and suspense, Shade is going to need all the help he can find -- if he hopes to ever see his family again.

Stones in the Water by Donna Jo Napoli

When Roberto sneaks off to see a movie in his small Italian village, he has no idea that life as he knows it is over. German soldiers raid the theater, round up the boys in the audience, and pack them onto a train. After a terrifying journey, Roberto and his best friend Samuele find themselves in a brutal work camp, where food is scarce but horror is everywhere. The boys vow to stay together no matter what. But Samuele has a dangerous secret, which, if discovered, could get them both killed...

Stranded by Ben Mikaelson

Twelve-year-old Koby, who has lost a foot in an accident, sees a chance to prove her self-reliance to her parents when she tries to rescue two stranded pilot whales near her home in the Florida Keys.

Sun and Spoon by Kevin Henkes

It's been only two months since Spoon Gilmore's grandmother died, but already he's worried that he'll forget her. He needs to own something of Gran's, something special. But Spoon's little sister, Joanie, won't give him time alone to think, even when they go to their grandfather's house. What happens there will stay with readers long after they finish Sun & Spoon.

Treasures in the Dust by Tracy Porter

Annie May Weightman and Violet Cobble are best friends and neighbors. They live in Cimarron County, Oklahoma, during the Great Depression. This is their story, told in two voices. Annie is happiest on the ground, sifting through the dust for traces of the past. But Violet is a dreamer always playing make believe to escape, to fly away from the dusty land. In this beautifully crafted first novel, poet Tracey Porter joins together two unique voices to tell a larger story of America, its hopes and dreams, during a time when thousands fled their prairie homes in search of work, food, and shelter. Annie and Violet's story is one of friendship and courage—treasures shining through in the face of hardship.

The View From Saturday by E.L. Konigsburg

How had Mrs. Olinski chosen her sixth-grade Academic Bowl team? She had a number of answers. But were any of them true? How had she really chosen Noah and Nadia and Ethan and Julian? And why did they make such a good team? It was a surprise to a lot of people when Mrs. Olinski's team won the sixth-grade Academic Bowl contest at Epiphany Middle School. It was an even bigger surprise when they beat the seventh grade and the eighth grade, too. And when they went on to even greater victories, everyone began to ask: How did it happen? It happened at least partly because Noah had been the best man (quite by accident) at the wedding of Ethan's grandmother and Nadia's grandfather. It happened because Nadia discovered that she could not let a lot of baby turtles die. It happened when Ethan could not let Julian face disaster alone. And it happened because Julian valued something important in himself and saw in the other three something he also valued. Mrs. Olinski, returning to teaching after having been injured in an automobile accident, found that her Academic Bowl team became her answer to finding confidence and success. What she did not know, at least at first, was that her team knew more than she did the answer to why they had been chosen. This is a tale about a team, a class, a school, a series of contests and, set in the midst of this, four jewel-like short stories -- one for each of the team members -- that ask questions and demonstrate surprising answers.