

Rebecca Caudill Young Readers' Book Award 2002 Nominees

Shipwreck at the Bottom of the World by Jennifer Armstrong

In August 1914, Ernest Shackleton and 27 men sailed from England in an attempt to become the first team of explorers to cross the Antarctic continent from one side to the other. Five months later and still 100 miles from land, their ship, *Endurance*, became trapped. The expedition survived an Antarctic winter in the icebound ship, then, after *Endurance* sank, five months camped on the ice followed by a perilous boat journey through storms and icebergs to remote and unvisited Elephant Island, 600 miles from Cape Horn. From there, their only hope was for someone to fetch help. In a dramatic climax to this amazing survival story, Shackleton and five others navigated 800 miles of the treacherous open ocean in a 20-foot boat and then hiked across the unmapped, glacier-strewn interior of South Georgia Island to a whaling station. In August 1916, 19 months after *Endurance* first became icebound, Shackleton led a rescue party back to Elephant Island for his men.

Backwater by Joan Bauer

Ivy Breedlove's family is driving her crazy. Generations of Breedloves have been prominent lawyers and her relatives expect her to follow suit. "We'll make her a lawyer yet!" they pronounce at a family reunion. Well, not if Ivy has her say. But how do you have your say when the voices surrounding you are so loud? Ivy's passion for the past provides an answer. As she works on completing a history of her illustrious family, she discovers other Breedlove women who broke the mold, including her father's sister Josephine. No one will talk about the reclusive Aunt Jo, so when Ivy hires a wilderness guide to find her, her family is less than thrilled. Armed with her thirst for knowledge, Ivy undertakes a dramatic journey up an icy mountain and into the backwater to try to find someone, perhaps, like herself.

Burning Up by Caroline Cooney

Fifteen-year-old Macey Clare has always loved her quiet, beautiful Connecticut hometown. It's the place where her grandparents live, the place where her mother grew up. Macey is looking forward to the summer to come. She's hoping for fun and romance with her neighbor's perfect grandson Austin. But when Macey wants to research the facts behind who set fire to a barn across the street from her grandparent's home, she is shocked no one wants to answer questions about the place that burned down 38 years ago. And when a tragedy strikes a new friend who lives in the inner city, something clicks in Macey. She must discover her own true colors and face whatever it is she is going to find. Can she stand alone and take responsibility for the present while uncovering the past?

Bud, Not Buddy by Christopher Paul Curtis

It's 1936, in Flint, Michigan. Ten-year-old Bud may be a motherless boy on the run, but he's on a mission. His momma never told him who his father was, but she left a clue: posters of Herman E. Calloway and his famous band, the Dusky Devastators of the

Depression! Bud's got an idea that those posters will lead to his father. Once he decides to hit the road and find this mystery man, nothing can stop him.

A Letter to Mrs. Roosevelt by C. Coco De Young

Eleven-year-old Margo Bandini has never been afraid of anything. Her life in Johnstown, Pennsylvania, with Mama and Papa and her little brother, Charlie, has always felt secure. But it's 1933, and the Great Depression is changing things for families all across America. One day the impossible happens: Papa cannot make the payments for their house, and the Sheriff Sale sign goes up on their door. They have two weeks to pay the bank, or leave their home forever. Now Margo is afraid--but she's also determined to find a way to help Papa save their home.

Because of Winn-Dixie by Kate DiCamillo

The summer Opal and her father, the preacher, move to Naomi, Florida, Opal goes into the Winn-Dixie supermarket-and comes out with a dog. A big, ugly, suffering dog with a sterling sense of humor. A dog she dubs Winn-Dixie. Because of Winn-Dixie, the preacher tells Opal ten things about her absent mother, one for each year Opal has been alive. Winn-Dixie is better at making friends than anyone Opal has ever known, and together they meet the local librarian, Miss Franny Block, who once fought off a bear with a copy of War and Peace. They meet Gloria Dump, who is nearly blind but sees with her heart, and Otis, an ex-con who sets the animals in his pet shop loose after hours, then lulls them with his guitar. Opal spends all that sweet summer collecting stories about her new friends, and thinking about her mother. But because of Winn-Dixie or perhaps because she has grown, Opal learns to let go, just a little, and that friendship-and forgiveness-can sneak up on you like a sudden summer storm.

Bandit's Moon by Sid Fleischman

Bad luck follows orphaned Annyrose Smith like an afternoon shadow. Her brother is lost to her -- gone to strike it rich in the California gold rush -- and now she's been snatched by a famed Mexican bandit who thinks she's a boy and decides she might be useful in his own quest. Joaquin has a price on his head and a reputation for revenge, it's true, but he's as deeply loyal to his family as Annyrose is to hers. Can this unlikely duo help each other find what they seek?

Million Dollar Shot by Dan Gutman

When Eddie Ball finds out about the Finkles poetry contest--a chance to win a million dollars just by sinking a foul ball at the NBA finals--he realizes it could be the end of his and his mother's problems. But someone really wants Eddie to shoot an air ball, and will do anything to sabotage the million dollar shot.

Among the Hidden by Margaret Haddix

Luke has never been to school. He's never had a birthday party, or gone to a friend's house for an overnight. In fact, Luke has never had a friend. Luke is one of the shadow children, a third child forbidden by the Population Police. He's lived his entire life in hiding, and now, with a new housing development replacing the woods next to his family's farm, he is no longer even allowed to go outside. Then, one day Luke sees a

girl's face in the window of a house where he knows two other children already live. Finally, he's met a shadow child like himself. Jen is willing to risk everything to come out of the shadows -- does Luke dare to become involved in her dangerous plan? Can he afford not to?

When Zachary Beaver Came to Town by Kimberly Willis Holt

The red words painted on the trailer caused quite a buzz around town and before an hour was up, half of Antler was standing in line with two dollars clutched in hand to see the fattest boy in the world. Toby Wilson is having the toughest summer of his life. It's the summer his mother leaves for good; the summer his best friend's brother returns from Vietnam in a coffin. And the summer that Zachary Beaver, the fattest boy in the world, arrives in their sleepy Texas town. While it's a summer filled with heartache of every kind, it's also a summer of new friendships gained and old friendships renewed. And it's Zachary Beaver who turns the town of Antler upside down and leaves everyone, especially Toby, changed forever.

The Trolls by Polly Horvath

Aunt Sally is beyond any of Melissa, Amanda, and Pee Wee's expectations. She has come all the way from Vancouver Island, Canada, to take care of the children while their parents are away, and right from the start Aunt Sally enchants them with tales of her childhood with their father. Odd characters figure largely in the stories, like Maud, a hunter rumored to have killed eighty cougars; Great-uncle Louis, a health nut who insists everyone should gnaw on sticks for extra fiber; and Fat Little Mean Girl, the star of a cautionary tale involving witchcraft and candy. All of Aunt Sally's reminiscences lead up to a crucial story about trolls, sinister creatures who supposedly lurked along the shore at night. The trolls had the power to change Aunt Sally's life forever, and their legacy may change the lives of the three present-day children as well.

Regarding the Fountain by Kate Klise

The Dry Creek Middle School drinking fountain has sprung a leak, so principal Walter Russ dashes off a request to Flowing Waters Fountains, Etc., asking for a new fountain. Designer Flo Waters responds with delight, but advises that all fountains are custom-made. Soon the fountain project takes on a life of its own, one chronicled in letters, postcards, memos, transcripts, and official documents. The school board is up in arms. So is the water-supply company. A scandal is brewing, and the fifth-grade class is turning up a host of hilarious secrets buried deep beneath the fountain.

Dave at Night by Gail Carson Levine

The year is 1926. Dave's beloved father is dead and his stepmother doesn't want him. Only the HHB will take him in--Hebrew Home for Boys. Hell Hole for Brats. Dave is tough, a troublemaker. He can take care of himself. If he doesn't like the Home, he'll run away and find a better place. Only it's not that simple...

Can You Feel the Thunder? by Lynn E. McElfresh

Life is complicated enough for thirteen-year-old Mic Parsons without living on Bixby Court, the weirdest street in America. For one thing, he has to pass math so his parents

will let him play baseball in the spring. And there's his locker, right between Godzilla Girl and Julia Patterson, who keeps slipping him love notes...and Freemont, who seems to have changed into someone Mic hardly recognizes as his best friend. The weirdest thing on Bixby Court, though, has got to be Mic's deaf-blind older sister, Stephanie, clomping around the house, touching everybody and everything. Mic hardly remembers when they used to have long fingerspelled conversations in the middle of the night, when they would play flashlight tag until Stephanie's gulp-laugh gave them away. Then Vern Chortle, aka "Nerd Boy," moves to Bixby Court. With his 382-pair sock collection, laminated maps, and beeping watch, he's the last person Mic wants as his shadow. Almost against his will, however, Mic finds himself spending more and more time at Vern's house. And as Mic lets himself admit to liking Vern, he also gradually realizes that Stephanie understands him in a way no one else can...and, surprisingly, might even be able to help put him back on the ball field again -- just like normal.

You're A Brave Man, Julius Zimmerman by Claudia Mills

The sequel to *Losers, Inc.* Twelve-year-old Julius Zimmerman is the former vice president of the defunct organization *Losers, Inc.* Ethan Winfield, the former president, no longer feels like a loser. But Julius still does, maybe because his mother thinks of him that way. To "improve" him, Mrs. Zimmerman signs Julius up for a summer course in intensive French and for a part-time job baby-sitting three-year-old Edison Blue. She also sets a summer reading goal for him. Julius doesn't ace the French class and doesn't do the required reading, but he does turn out to have a winning way with kids -- and adults -- and in the end proves to his mother that her criteria for success aren't the only ones.

Ties That Bind, Ties That Break by Lensey Namioka

Third Sister in the Tao family, Ailin has watched her two older sisters go through the painful process of having their feet bound. In China in 1911, all the women of good families follow this ancient tradition. But Ailin loves to run away from her governess and play games with her male cousins. Knowing she will never run again once her feet are bound, Ailin rebels and refuses to follow this torturous tradition. As a result, however, the family of her intended husband breaks their marriage agreement. And as she enters adolescence, Ailin finds that her family is no longer willing to support her. Chinese society leaves few options for a single woman of good family, but with a bold conviction and an indomitable spirit, Ailin is determined to forge her own destiny. Her story is a tribute to all those women whose courage created new options for the generations who came after them.

Sunwing by Kenneth Oppel

Shade, a young Silverwing bat in search of his father, discovers a mysterious Human building containing a vast forest. Home to thousands of bats, the indoor forest is as warm as a summer night and teeming with insects to eat. And through the glass roof, the bats can finally see the sun, free from the tyranny of the deadly owls. Is this Paradise the fulfillment of Nocturna's Promise to return the bats to the light of day? Shade and his Brightwing friend Marina aren't so sure. Shade has seen Humans enter the forest and take away hundreds of sleeping bats for an unknown purpose. And where

is Shade's father? It isn't long before Shade and Marina are swept up on a perilous journey that takes them to the far southern jungle -- the homeland of Goth, now king of all the Vampyrum Spectrum: cannibal bats with three-foot wingspans. With the help of an abandoned owl prince and General Cortez's rat army, Shade must use all his resourcefulness to find his father -- and stop Goth from harnessing the dark powers of Cama Zotz to create eternal night.

Holes by Louis Sachar

Stanley Yelnats is under a curse. A curse that began with his no-good-dirty-rotten-pig-stealing-great-great-grandfather and has since followed generations of Yelnats. Now Stanley has been unjustly sent to a boys' detention center, Camp Green Lake, where the warden makes the boys "build character" by spending all day, every day, digging holes: five feet wide and five feet deep. It doesn't take long for Stanley to realize there's more than character improvement going on at Camp Green Lake. The boys are digging holes because the warden is looking for something. Stanley tries to dig up the truth in this inventive and darkly humorous tale of crime and punishment--and redemption.

Crash by Jerry Spinelli

Newbery medalist Jerry Spinelli tackles the tale of cocky seventh-grade super-jock Crash Coogan, who got his nickname the day he used his first football helmet to knock his cousin Bridget flat on her backside. And he has been running over people ever since, especially Penn Webb, the dweeby, vegetarian Quaker kid who lives down the block. Through the eyes of Crash, readers get a rare glimpse into the life of a bully in this unforgettable story about stereotypes and the surprises life can bring.

Sammy Keyes and the Hotel Thief by Wendelin Van Draanen

While scanning the neighborhood with some high-powered binoculars, Sammy spots something strange at the Heavenly Hotel. A man in one room is wearing gloves and rummaging through a purse. When he looks out the window straight at Sammy, what does she do? She waves.