

Rebecca Caudill Young Readers' Book Award 2007 Nominees

Airborn by Kenneth Oppel

Matt Cruse is a cabin boy on the Aurora, a huge airship that sails hundreds of feet above the ocean, ferrying wealthy passengers from city to city. It is the life Matt's always wanted; convinced he's lighter than air, he imagines himself as buoyant as the hydrium gas that powers his ship. One night he meets a dying balloonist who speaks of beautiful creatures drifting through the skies. It is only after Matt meets the balloonist's granddaughter that he realizes that the man's ravings may, in fact, have been true, and that the creatures are completely real and utterly mysterious.

Becoming Naomi Leon by Pam Muñoz Ryan

One evening, everything Naomi has known with Gram and her little brother begins to unravel. Naomi's mother wants to kidnap her. Gram is willing to go to the end of the earth to save Naomi, but will that be enough? A quiet life in Lemon Tree, California, becomes a runaway journey to find an estranged father in exotic Oaxaca, Mexico.

Chasing Vermeer by Blue Balliett

When a book of unexplainable occurrences brings Petra Andalee and Calder Pillay together, strange things start to happen: Seemingly unrelated events connect, an eccentric old woman seeks their company, and an invaluable Vermeer painting disappears. Before they know it, the two find themselves at the center of an international art scandal, where no one -- neighbors, parents, teachers -- is spared from suspicion. As Petra and Calder are drawn clue by clue into a mysterious labyrinth, they must draw on their powers of intuition, their problem-solving skills, and their knowledge of Vermeer. Can they decipher a crime that has left even the FBI baffled?

Each Little Bird That Sings by Deborah Wiles

Ten-year-old Comfort Snowberger has attended 247 funerals. But that's not surprising, considering that her family runs the town funeral home. And even though Great-uncle Edisto keeled over with a heart attack and Great-great-aunt Florentine dropped dead-- just like that--six months later, Comfort knows how to deal with loss, or so she thinks. She's more concerned with avoiding her crazy cousin Peach and trying to figure out why her best friend, Declaration, suddenly won't talk to her. Life is full of surprises. And the biggest one of all is learning what it takes to handle them.

Gregor the Overlander by Suzanne Collins

When Gregor falls through a grate in the laundry room of his apartment building, he hurtles into the dark Underland, where spiders, rats, cockroaches coexist uneasily with humans. This world is on the brink of war, and Gregor's arrival is no accident. A prophecy foretells that Gregor has a role to play in the Underland's uncertain future. Gregor wants no part of it -- until he realizes it's the only way to solve the mystery of his father's disappearance. Reluctantly, Gregor embarks on a dangerous adventure that will change both him and the Underland forever.

Hachiko Waits by Leslea Newman

The loyalty and devotion of a dog has no bounds. "What a good dog you are. What a fine dog you are. Hachi, you are the best dog in all of Japan." Professor Ueno speaks these words to his faithful dog before boarding the train to work every morning. And every afternoon just before three o'clock, Hachi is at the train station to greet his beloved master. One day, the train arrives at the station without the professor. Hachi waits. For ten years Hachi waits for his master to return. Not even Yasuo, the young boy who takes care of Hachi, can persuade him to leave his post. Hachiko Waits is a novel inspired by a true story. Readers will be touched by the story of Hachiko and his impact on the people of Japan.

Hana's Suitcase by Karen Levine

In March 2000, a suitcase arrived at a children's Holocaust education center in Tokyo, Japan. On the outside, in white paint, were these words: Hana Brady, May 16, 1931, and Waisenkind—the German word for orphan. Children who saw the suitcase on display were full of questions. Who was Hana Brady? What happened to her? They wanted Fumiko Ishioka, the center's curator, to find the answers. In a suspenseful journey, Fumiko searches for clues across Europe and North America. The mystery of the suitcase takes her back through seventy years, to a young Hana and her family, whose happy life in a small Czech town was turned upside down by the invasion of the Nazis.

Heartbeat by Sharon Creech

Run run run. That's what twelve-year-old Annie loves to do. When she's barefoot and running, she can hear her heart beating . . . thump-THUMP, thump-THUMP. It's a rhythm that makes sense in a year when everything's shifting: Her mother is pregnant, her grandfather is forgetful, and her best friend, Max, is always moody. Everything changes over time, just like the apple Annie's been assigned to draw. But as she watches and listens, Annie begins to understand the many rhythms of life, and how she fits within them.

Ida B: And Her Plans to Maximize Fun, Avoid Disaster, and (Possibly) Save the World by Katherine Hannigan

Who is Ida B. Applewood? She is a fourth grader like no other, living a life like no other, with a voice like no other, and her story will resonate long after you have put this book down. How does Ida B cope when outside forces—life, really—attempt to derail her and her family and her future? She enters her Black Period, and it is not pretty. But then, with the help of a patient teacher, a loyal cat and dog, her beloved apple trees, and parents who believe in the same things she does (even if they sometimes act as though they don't), the resilience that is the very essence of Ida B triumphs...and Ida B. Applewood takes the hand that is extended and starts to grow up.

Last Shot by John Feinstein

Danny Jordan is one of two lucky winners of the US Basketball Writer's Association's contest for aspiring journalists. His prize? A trip to New Orleans and a coveted press pass for the Final Four. It's a basketball junkie's dream come true! But the games going

on behind the scenes between the coaches, the players, the media, the money-men, and the fans turn out to be even more fiercely competitive than those on the court. Danny and his fellow winner, Brigid-Ann Robinson, are nosing around the Superdome ad overhear what sounds like a threat to throw the championship game. Now they have just 48 hours to figure out who is blackmailing one of MSU's star players . . . and why.

Locomotion by Jacqueline Woodson

When Lonnie Collins Motion—Locomotion—was seven years old, his life changed forever. Now he's eleven, and his life is about to change again. His teacher, Ms. Marcus, is showing him ways to put his jumbled feelings on paper. And suddenly, Lonnie has a whole new way to tell the world about his life, his friends, his little sister Lili, and even his foster mom, Miss Edna, who started out crabby but isn't so bad after all.

Once Upon a Marigold by Jean Ferris

Christian is gaga for Princess Marigold. But he's just a commoner, and no match for royalty. Heck, he lives in a cave with a troll! And now he's discovered another reason to put his love-soggy heart on ice: Queen Olympia is scheming to take over the kingdom-- and she'll bump off her own daughter to do it. Can Christian foil her diabolical plans?

Peter and the Starcatchers by Dave Barry and Ridley Pearson

In an evocative and fast-paced adventure on the high seas and on a faraway island, an orphan boy named Peter and his mysterious new friend, Molly, overcome bands of pirates and thieves in their quest to keep a fantastical secret safe and save the world from evil.

Red Kayak by Priscilla Cummings

Brady loves life on the Chesapeake Bay with his friends J.T. and Digger. But developers and rich families are moving into the area, and while Brady befriends some of them, like the DiAngelos, his parents and friends are bitter about the changes. Tragedy strikes when the DiAngelos' kayak overturns in the bay, and Brady wonders if it was more than an accident. Soon, Brady discovers the terrible truth behind the kayak's sinking, and it will change the lives of those he loves forever.

The Sea of Trolls by Nancy Farmer

Jack was eleven when the berserkers loomed out of the fog and nabbed him. "It seems that things are stirring across the water," the Bard had warned. "Ships are being built, swords are being forged." "Is that bad?" Jack had asked, for his Saxon village had never before seen berserkers. "Of course. People don't make ships and swords unless they intend to use them." The year is A.D. 793. In the next months, Jack and his little sister, Lucy, are enslaved by Olaf One-Brow and his fierce young shipmate, Thorgil. With a crow named Bold Heart for mysterious company, they are swept up into an adventure-quest in the spirit of The Lord of the Rings. Other threats include a willful mother dragon, a giant spider, and a troll-bear with a surprising personality -- to say nothing of Ivar the Boneless and his wife, Queen Frith, a shape-shifting half-troll, and several eight-foot-tall, orange-haired, full-time trolls.

Secrets of a Civil War Submarine by Sally Walker

In 1864 the H.L. Hunley made history by being the first submarine to sink an enemy ship. After its famous mission, however, something went terribly wrong, and the vessel never returned to port. For years, divers searched for the wreck of the Hunley. In 1995 the ship was finally found; only then did scientists and historians begin to answer century-old questions about its final voyage.

Shackleton's Stowaway by Victoria McKernan

On October 26, 1914, Ernest Shackleton's *Endurance* set sail from Buenos Aires in pursuit of the last unclaimed prize in exploration: the crossing of the Antarctic continent. The crew stood on deck to watch the city fade away. All but one. Eighteen-year-old Perce Blackborow hid below in a locker. But the thrill of stowing away with the legendary explorer would soon turn to fear. Within months, the *Endurance*, trapped and crushed by ice, sank. And even Perce, the youngest member of the stranded crew, knew there was no hope of rescue. If the men were to survive in the most hostile place on earth, they would have to do it on their own.

So B. It by Sarah Weeks

Although she lives an unconventional lifestyle with her mentally disabled mother and their doting neighbor, Bernadette, Heidi has a lucky streak that has a way of pointing her in the right direction. When a mysterious word in her mother's vocabulary begins to haunt her, Heidi's thirst for the truth leads her on a cross-country journey in search of the secrets of her past.

Star of Kazan by Eva Ibbotson

Annika is happy living in the servants' quarters of a house owned by three eccentric professors. She adores Ellie and Sigrid, the cook and housemaid who found her as a baby, abandoned on a church doorstep. In the eleven years since, they have taught her how to bake and clean to perfection. Then one day a glamorous stranger arrives, claiming to be Annika's mother. Annika is no servant, she learns, but an aristocrat whose true home is an ancient castle. But at crumbling Spittal, Annika discovers that all is not as it seems in the lives of her newfound family.

Thin Wood Walls by David Patneaude

Eleven-year-old Joe Hanada likes playing basketball with his best friend, Ray, writing plays and stories, and thinking about the upcoming Christmas holiday. But his world falls apart when Japanese planes bomb Pearl Harbor. His country goes to war. The FBI takes his father away. And neighbors and friends in his hometown near Seattle begin to suspect Joe, his family, and all Japanese Americans of spying for the enemy. When the government orders people of Japanese heritage living on the West Coast to move to internment camps, Joe turns to the journal his father gave him to record his thoughts and feelings. Writing journal entries and haiku poetry offers some relief as Joe struggles to endure life in Tule Lake War Relocation Camp—days filled with boredom, concern for his father, and worry for his brother, who joins the American army to prove the bravery and loyalty of Japanese American citizens.