

# The Bookmark

## A Newsletter of the Redwood Falls Public Library December/January, 2012

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Library Web Page: <http://www.redwoodfallslibrary.org>

Online Catalog: <http://opac.plumcreeklibrary.net>

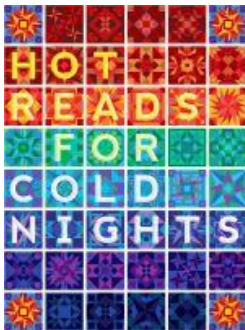
State-Wide Library Link: [www.mnlink.org](http://www.mnlink.org)

### Notes From Robin

We all wish you a happy Holiday and a safe and warm winter.

Please join us for “Hot Reads for Cold Nights” and a chance to win weekly prizes!

When next we meet, I will introduce you to our little Maltese, Jazzie.



### HOT READS FOR COLD NIGHTS ADULT WINTER READING PROGRAM

#### Connecting Minnesota Writers and Minnesota Readers

**January 1 – March 31, 2012**

How to participate . . .

- Open to anyone 16 years or older with a current library card
- Sign the Registration form at your local library and indicate if you participated in the

Winter Reading Program in 2011 or if this is the first year you have participated.

- Your Library will give you a punch card to record the number of books read. You will receive one colored punch card to start your reading adventure. Additional punch cards (if needed) will be in black and white and also available at your library. Turn in all cards regardless of whether your card has all 12 punches punched.
- You are encouraged to read as many titles as you like.
- However, in order for your punch card to be counted toward your library’s chance at the traveling trophy and be considered as “completing the program”, a minimum of 12 books (12 card punches) is required.
- Titles may be in any format including audio books.

*Help your library compete for the “Champion Readers Traveling Trophy” by reading as many titles as you can. Prizes may await you as well . . . check with your friendly Librarians for details.*

**Have a safe, restful and warm winter season.  
Make YOUR “Hot Reads for Cold Nights”  
memorable!**

**Sponsored by the Plum Creek Library System  
and the Redwood Falls Public Library.**

*“This project was funded in part or in whole with money from the vote of the people of Minnesota on November 4, 2008 which dedicated funding to preserve Minnesota’s arts and cultural heritage.”*

Robin Osland, Director  
Redwood Falls Public Library  
[rosland@plumcreeklibrary.net](mailto:rosland@plumcreeklibrary.net)

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### Library Holiday Hours

The Library will be CLOSED December 24<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup> for the Christmas weekend. Also, we will be CLOSED December 31<sup>st</sup>, January 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2012 for the New Year's Holiday weekend.

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### Upcoming Adult Programs

#### CULTURAL SHARING SERIES:



#### Sacred Ceremonial Herbs : October 27, 2011 @ 12pm

Through this lecture you will learn the significance and purpose of sacred and ceremonial herbs and plants in the Dakota Culture.

#### Traditional Dakota Foods: November 21, 2011 @ 12pm

Ceremonial foods are an important part of Native American culture and celebration. You will be introduced to some of the authentic foods that are an important part of American Indian life, and a cookbook with some recipes will be given out.

#### Dakota Spirituality: December 29, 2011 @ 12pm

The Dakota people do not view Spirituality as a religion but rather a way of life. Many of the beautiful and meaningful ceremonies and traditions will be explored and explained at this presentation.

#### Dakota Youth in Present Day Society: January 12, 2012 @ 6pm

American Indian youth in today's society are challenged to maintain integrity for the Dakota way of life. A group of Native American youth from the area will have a panel discussion with time for questions and answers from the audience.

#### Dakota Storytelling: February 23, 2012 @ 12pm

To the Dakota People storytelling is done as a way of disciplining and used as a tool for learning. Storytelling is the way knowledge and understanding is passed from generation to generation.

#### Dakota Language: March 29, 2012 @ 12pm

Why is the Dakota language sacred? According to our ancestors it was given to us from the Creator. Prior to European contact it was never written down. Credit can be given to brothers Samuel and

Gideon Pond along with Thomas Williamson and Stephen Return Riggs.

#### Seven Sacred Rites of the Dakota: April 26, 2012

- The Keeping of the Soul
- Inipi: The Rite of Purification
- Hanblecheyapi: Crying for a Vision
- Wiwanyag Wachipi: The Sun Dance
- Hunkapi: The Making of Relatives
- Ishna Ta Awi Cha Lowan: Preparing a Girl for Womanhood
- Tapa Wanka Yap: Throwing of the Ball

#### The Wacipi – A Pow Wow: May 19, 2012 from 9 – 5P

Wacipi is (Pow Wow). Waci – to dance. P – pluralizes a word so Wacipi equals they dance. Spiritual gathering, celebration, socialization of a new Spring. Significance of regalia. Difference dance categories between men, women, boys and girls. Wacipi is the Dakota work when translated means to dance.

#### FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY TRAVEL SERIES



We all love a trip to a foreign country, don't we, but traveling in the winter isn't always easy. The Friends of the Redwood Falls Public Library, with our wonderful community members in mind, have put together a series of trips for you, and all you have to do is come to the Library on the appointed date and time and off you go!

All of the travels you will hear about are recent experiences of our travel guides. Every program is on a Monday and every program will begin at 12:00 p.m. noon and last for one hour. Feel free to stop by on your lunch hour and bring a brown bag lunch.

Monday, January 9, 2012 at 12:00 p.m. noon  
INDIA

**Travel Guide: Robin Stegner**

Monday, February 6, 2012 at 12:00 p.m. noon  
JERUSALEM

## Travel Guide: Gwen Harrington

Monday, March 5<sup>th</sup>, 2012 at 12:00 p.m. noon  
AFHANISTAN

Travel Guide: Stephen Collins

Monday, March 19, 2012 at 12:00 p.m. noon  
VIENNA, SALZBURG, MILAN AND LAKE  
COMO

Travel Guides: The Hollatzs & The Leppers

These programs are FREE and open to the public and handicapped accessible. **SEE YOU THERE!!**

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## Websites by Sherri

Reader's Website by Sherri

*FictFact* is a website that can help you keep track of fiction books that you read that are in a series. One of the cofounders of the website loves to read serial fiction, but had difficulty in keeping track of the books she had read. So, her and her husband developed *FictFact* a tool for keeping track of books and the authors who wrote them.

It is suggested that you register, so that *FictFact* can then keep track of the books you have read and give you a list of what to read next. You can also find users with similar tastes, tag books and series and get suggestions on other book series. All for free! You can also use *FictFact* to just find books without registering.

I did register and entered a couple of series that I have read. I read a series by Gail Carringer and after entering the books that I had read of hers. I went to my profile page and under the coming soon icon they had the next book listed with its release date on March 1, 2012. The site looks good for people who like to keep track of the series they read. It may take a bit of time if you read a lot of series like me, but it looks like it would be worth the time. So, if you read series book and would like assistance in keeping track of your books, check out the site: <http://www.fictfact.com>.



## Book Clubs

Interested in joining a daytime book club? We meet the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of each month in the Library Meeting Room from 12:00 to 1:00 or 2:00 p.m. Come and check us out! There's always room for more. (We are enjoying really good lunches, too!) We meet for discussion and potluck. The following are the 2012 selections, with menu, January through June, 2012:

December 27<sup>th</sup> – *The Girls from Ames* by Jeffrey Zaslow with Christmas treats and appetizers. Meet the Ames Girls: eleven childhood friends who form a special bond growing up in Ames, Iowa, and manage to maintain an enduring friendship into adulthood.

January 24<sup>th</sup> – *Molaka 'I* by Alan Brennert with baked potato bar. This richly imagined novel, set in Hawaii more than a century ago, is an extraordinary epic of a little known time and place—and a deeply moving testament to the resiliency of the human spirit.

February 28<sup>th</sup> – *One Tuesday Morning* by Karen Kingsbury with Oriental Food. Author Karen Kingsbury shows how the September 11<sup>th</sup> terrorist attacks on New York City's World Trade Center affect the spiritual journeys of these families, couples, and individuals.

March 27<sup>th</sup> – *Now They Call Me Infidel* by Nonie Darwish with waffles. Why are so many Muslims embracing jihad and cheering for al-Qaeda and Hamas? Why are even the modern, secularized Arab states such as Egypt producing a generation of angry young extremists? Nonie Darwish knows why.

April 24<sup>th</sup> – *The Paris Wife* by Paula McLain with French Food. A deeply evocative story of ambition and betrayal, *The Paris Wife* captures a remarkable period of time and a love affair between two

unforgettable people: Ernest Hemingway and his wife Hadley.

May 22<sup>nd</sup> – *Work Song* by Ivan Doig with Hotdish and Jello. When Morrie Morgan gets caught up in the mounting clash between the mining company, outside agitators, and the beleaguered miners, he finds a unique way to give a voice to those who truly need one.

June 26<sup>th</sup> – *Bloodline* by Mark Billingham with Southern Food. The past is coming back to haunt the people of London: a murderer is targeting the children of victims of Raymond Garvey, an infamous serial killer from London's past.

Everyone is welcome! Come when you can.

Other Book Club Ideas? - The Library would also encourage other book clubs to get started. Are you interested in an evening group? A men's group? A mystery group? The Library would help by ordering copies of the title chosen and provide discussion questions. You would be responsible for selecting your own titles and leading the group discussions.

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## **THE FRIENDS OF THE REDWOOD FALLS PUBLIC LIBRARY**

The Friends of the Library meet four times a year. The following are meeting dates for 2012: February 16th, 2012, May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2012, September 10<sup>th</sup>, 2012 and November 8<sup>th</sup>, 2012. Please join us and bring a friend! Come and check out all the exciting events coming up this year at the Library.

Please call Joyce Johnson at 627-1895 to get more information or to volunteer to be part of any of the Friends' activities.

At the Annual Meeting in November, new officers for 2012 were elected, and they are as follows:

President: Diane Knorr

Vice President: Pat Van Stralen

Treasurer: Joyce Johnson

Secretary: Betty Lange

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## **RECIPE OF THE MONTH**

### **Eggnog Monte Cristos**

#### **Ingredients**

1 1/2 tablespoons dijon mustard  
1 1/2 tablespoons mayonnaise  
9 slices white sandwich bread  
6 slices muenster or gouda cheese  
6 slices oven-roasted turkey (leftover or deli-sliced)  
6 slices baked ham (leftover or deli-sliced)  
1/2 cup eggnog  
Generous pinch of freshly grated nutmeg  
3 tablespoons unsalted butter  
Confectioners' sugar, for dusting (optional)  
Cranberry sauce, for serving

#### **Directions**

Mix the mustard and mayonnaise in a small bowl. Lay out 3 slices of bread and brush each with about 1 teaspoon of the mustard mixture. Top each piece of bread with 1 slice each of cheese, turkey and ham. Cover with another slice of bread and brush with another teaspoon of the mustard mixture; top each sandwich with another slice each of cheese, turkey and ham. Brush the remaining 3 bread slices with the mustard mixture and place mustard-side down on top of the sandwiches.

Trim the crusts, then wrap the sandwiches tightly with plastic wrap. Chill in the refrigerator at least 30 minutes and up to 6 hours. (Wrapping the sandwiches helps keep them compact.)

Whisk the eggnog and nutmeg in a shallow bowl. Unwrap the sandwiches and dip in the eggnog, turning to coat both sides. Melt half of the butter in a large nonstick skillet over medium heat. Add the sandwiches and cook until the undersides are golden, 3 to 4 minutes. Add the remaining butter, flip the sandwiches and cook until golden on the other side, about 3 more minutes.

Cut the sandwiches into quarters. Dust with confectioners' sugar, if desired, and serve with cranberry sauce

## **Peppermint Bark**

### Ingredients

Crushed candy canes, to yield 1 cup  
2 pounds white chocolate  
Peppermint flavorings, optional

### Directions

Place candy canes in a plastic bag and hammer into 1/4-inch chunks or smaller. Melt the chocolate in a double boiler. Combine candy cane chunks with chocolate (add peppermint flavoring at this point if desired.) Pour mixture onto a cookie sheet layered with parchment or waxed paper and place in the refrigerator for 45 minutes or until firm. Remove from cookie sheet and break into pieces (like peanut brittle.)

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## **Family History and Genealogy News** **Ancestry.com** **By Molly**

Our first fall genealogy workshop has just finished. There was a lot of information shared and learned by all, teacher and students alike!

The biggest excitement came from the many discoveries found while using our Ancestry Library Edition subscription. I thought this would be a good time to share how much information you can find on Ancestry Library Edition. Some of the records you'll be able to search include: an every name index of the U.S. Federal Census and original images; a name index and images from the U.K. and Ireland census collection; birth, marriage and death records; an Immigration collection which includes images of ships and original documents; military records and many more.

To use our subscription to Ancestry Library Edition please check in at the front desk and once at the computer, search the desktop for the icon reading "Genealogy..."

Also, we are considering what classes to offer during the winter months. If you'd be interested in a winter time workshop to learn more about how to do family history or a class just on how to use our

subscription to Ancestry Library Edition, please stop at the front desk and leave your name and contact information.

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## **News from the Children's Department** **By Jill**

### **December**

#### **Preschool Story Hour**

Tuesday Mornings December 6<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup>  
10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Explore the world this fall through stories, songs, finger plays, games, crafts, and many other activities ideal for encouraging literacy in your preschool age children. For ages 3-5.

#### **Family Movie Night:**

##### **Captain America**

Tuesday, December 20<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m.

After being deemed unfit for military service, Steve Rogers volunteers for a top secret research project that turns into Captain America, a superhero dedicated to defending America's ideals. This movie is rated PG-13 (for some "intense sci-fi action").

Event is FREE and open to all ages. Popcorn and juice provided.

#### **Adventure Club**

Tuesday, December 13<sup>th</sup>  
3:30 – 5:00 p.m.

We will be talking about "Water Pollution" and how pollutants aren't always visible. Grades K-4 You never know what you might miss!!

This program is being offered through a collaboration with the University of Minnesota Extension and the Redwood Area 4-H.

## **News from Teen Department**

### **FUSE**

Thursday, December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2011  
4:00 – 5:00 p.m.

Time to discuss all things FUSE related . . . Anime Club, upcoming activities, helping with the Book Sale and having a Bake Sale. Help us plan the upcoming year!!!

### **Movie Matinee**

You are out of school so what better place is there to spend a fun afternoon? Come join us for popcorn, juice and the movie . . .

#### ***Kung Fu Panda 2***

Po Joins forces with a group of new kung-fu masters to take on an old enemy with a deadly new weapon.

Wednesday, December 28<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 p.m. in the Library Meeting Room.

This movie is rated PG.

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## **New Books Available At the Library!**

### **New Adult Fiction**

Andrews, V.C. – *Cloudburst*  
Armintrout, Jennifer – *American Vampire*  
Austin, Lynn – *Wonderland Creek*  
Baldacci, David – *Zero Day*  
Banks, Russell – *Lost Memory of Skin*  
Barnes, Julian – *The Sense of an Ending*  
Beck, Glenn – *The Snow Angel*  
Blackstock, Terri – *Shadow in Serenity*  
Bohjalian, Christopher – *The Night Strangers*  
Bradley, Alan – *I Am Half-Sick of Shadows*  
Brand, Max – *Train's Trust*  
Brunstetter, Wanda – *The Healing*  
Brunstetter, Wanda – *A Log Cabin Christmas*  
Chiaverini, Jennifer – *The Wedding Quilt*  
Coelho, Paulo – *Aleph*  
Coulter, Catherine – *The Prince of Ravenscar*  
Cussler, Clive – *Devil's Gate*  
Del Toro, Guillermo – *The Night Eternal*  
Eisler, Barry – *The Detachment*  
Eugenides, Jeffrey – *The Marriage Plot*  
Evanovich, Janet – *Explosive Eighteen*  
Evans, Richard Paul – *Lost December*  
Goleman, David – *Ancients*  
Goleman, David – *Legend*  
Grafton, Sue – *V is for Vengeance*  
Habel, Lia – *Dearly Departed*  
Hake, Kelly – *Prairie Promises Trilogy*  
Henschel, Lee – *Knight Sky: The Battle for Sector 27*  
Herman, Kathy – *Dangerous Mercy*  
King, Stephen – *11/23/63: A Novel*  
Kingsbury, Karen – *Longing*  
Lindsay, Jeff – *Double Dexter*  
Lupton, Rosamund – *Sister: A Novel*  
Kinkade, Thomas – *Christmas Treasures*  
Macomber, Debbie – *Trading Christmas*  
Maguire, Gregory – *Out of Oz*  
Modesitt, L.E. – *Scholar*  
Murakami, Haruki – *1Q84*  
Ondaatje, Michael – *The Cat's Table*  
Patten, Lewis – *Hang Him High*  
Patterson, James – *Kill Alex Cross*  
Penman, Sharon Kay – *Lionheart*  
Pratchett, Terry – *Snuff*  
Priest, Cherie – *Ganymede*  
Rawles, James – *Suivivors: A Novel of the Coming Collapse*  
Rosenberg, Joel C. – *The Tehran Initiative*

Salvatore, R.A. – *Neverwinter*  
Sanderson, Brandon – *The Alloy of Laws: A Mistborn Novel*  
Snelling, Lauraine – *Valley of Dreams*  
Steel, Danielle – *Hotel Vendome*  
Stevens, Taylor – *The Informationist*  
Taylor, Patrick – *A Dublin Student Doctor*  
VanLiere, Donna – *The Christmas Note*  
Warren, Susan May – *Baby, It's Cold Outside*  
Wells, Dan – *I Don't Want to Kill You*  
Wilson, F. Paul – *The Dark at the End*

### **New Avalon Books**

Cogan, Karen – *Heart of the Mountain*  
Culp, Judy and Ron – *The Search for Honor*  
Kennison, Jim – *Heartbreak Trail to Pueblo*  
Marks, Shirley – *Perfectly Flawed*  
Mayr, Ilsa – *The Widow*  
Naramore, Rosemarie – *Lacey's Homecoming*

### **New Adult Paperback**

Brandvold, Peter - *.45 Caliber Desperado*  
Johnstone, William – *Massacre Mountain*  
MacLean, Sarah – *Eleven Scandals to Start to Win a Duke's Heart*  
Miller, Linda Lael – *Holiday in Stone Creek*  
Shalvis, Jill – *Animal Magnetism*  
Wheeler, Richard S. – *The Owl Hunt*  
West, Charles – *Outlaw Pass*

### **New Adult Nonfiction**

Armstrong, Ken – *Scoreboard Baby: A Story of College Football, Crime and Complicity* – 796.332 ARM  
*Better Homes & Gardens – Better Homes & Gardens Annual Recipes* – 641.5 BET 2011  
*Better Homes & Gardens – Christmas Cooking From the Heart* – 641.5 CHR  
Bray, Ilona – *U.S. Immigration Made Easy* – 342.7308 BRA  
Cain, Herman – *This Is Herman Cain* – 324.973 CAI  
Clinton, Bill – *Back to Work* – 330.973 CLI  
Darst, Jeanne – *Fiction Ruined My Family* – 921 DAR  
Didion, Joan – *Blue Nights* – 921 DID  
Isaacson, Walter – *Steve Jobs* – 921 JOB  
Kasper, Lynne Rossetto – *The Splendid Table's How to Eat Weekends* – 641.5 KAS

Larsen, Christopher S. – *Haunted Mantorville:*

*Trailing the Ghosts of Old Minnesota* – 133.109

LAR

Leifer, Neil – *Guts and Glory: The Golden Age of American Football* – 796.332 LEI

Malarkey, Kevin – *The Boy Who Came Back From Heaven* – 236 MAR

Marks, Craig – *I Want My MTV: The Uncensored Story of the Music Video Revolution* – 791.45 MAR

Martin, Erin – *Fit To Serve: Reflections on a Secret Life* – James Hormel – 327.209 MAR

Morgan, Robert – *Lions of the West* – 978.02 MOR

Orlean, Susan – *Rin Tin Tin: The Life and the Legend* – 636.737

Parnell, David – *Facing the Dragon: How a Desperate Act Pulled One Addict Out of Meth Hell*

– 362.29 PAR

Pollan, Michael – *Food Rules: An Eater's Handbook* – 613.2 POL

Taste of Home – *Taste of Home Annual Recipes 2012* -641.5 TAS 2012

Thomas, William G. – *The Iron Way: Railroads, the Civil War, and the Making of Modern America* – 973.7 THO

Turbow, Jason – *The Baseball Codes: Beanballs, Sign Stealing, and Bench-Clearing Brawls* – 796.357 TUR

West, Jerry – *West by West: My Charmed, Tormented Life* – 796.323 WES

Wulf, Andrea – *Founding Gardeners: The Revolutionary Generation* – 712.0973 WUL

Yolan, Jane – *Things to Say to a Dead Man* – 811.54 YOL

### **New Large Print Books**

Butcher, Jim – *Ghost Story*

Chiaverini, Jennifer – *The Wedding Quilt*

Coulter, Catherine – *The Prince of Ravenscar*

Evans, Richard Paul – *Lost December*

Eugenides, Jeffery – *The Marriage Plot*

Feldman, Ellen – *Next to Love*

Graham, Heather – *An Angel for Christmas*

Johansen, Iris – *Bonnie*

Kepler, Lars – *The Hypnotist*

King, Stephen – *11/23/63: A Novel*

Perry, Anne – *A Christmas Homecoming*

Roberts, Nora – *The Next Always*

Ryan, Tom – *Following Atticus*

Scottoline, Lisa – *Best Friends, Occasional*

*Enemies* – 818.54 SCO

### **Children's Department**

#### **EASY BOOKS**

*I Want My Hat Back* by J. Klassen

*The Bippolo & Other Lost Stories* by Dr. Seuss

*Homer, The Library Cat* by Reeve Lindbergh

*Snowy Valentine* by David Petersen

*The Third Gift* by Linda Sue Park

*The Prince's New Pet* by Brian Anderson

#### **JUVENILE FICTION**

*Middle School, The Worst Years of My Life* by James Patterson

*The Dead Gentleman* by Matthew Cody

*The Winter Pony* by Iain Lawrence

#### **JUVENILE SERIES**

*The Twilight Circus: Wolven Book 2* by Di Toft

*A King's Ransom: Cahills vs Vespers Book 2: 39*

*Clues* by Jude Watson

*Blast From the Past: Allie Finkle's Rules for Girls*

*Book 6* by Meg Cabot

*Scumble: Beaumont Family Book 2* by Ingrid Law

#### **JUVENILE NON-FICTION**

*Keeping It Clean : Our Earth: Conservation* by

Peggy Hock

*Saving Water : Our Earth: Conservation* by Peggy

Hock

#### **YOUNG ADULT**

*Inheritance: Inheritance Book 4* by Christopher

Paolini

#### **DVDS:**

#### **Family**

*Brother Bear* DVD-2288

*Brother Bear 2* DVD-2289

*Garfield, The Movie* DVD-312

*Miracle Dogs* DVD-2290

*The Nutcracker: The Untold Story* DVD-1163

*Open Season* DVD-781

*Over the Hedge* DVD-2287

## **Drama**

*Atlas Shrugged Part One* DVD-1235

*Footloose* DVD-717

*Harry Brown* DVD-2281

*Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows Part 2* DVD  
2280

*Justified Complete First Season* DVDs 2275-2277

*Pirates of the Caribbean On Stranger Tides* DVD-  
2283

*Sarah's Key* DVD-2293

*SpaceCamp* DVD-2291

*Super 8* DVD-2294

*Water for Elephants* DVD-2282

## **Comedy**

*Larry Crowne* DVD-2278

*Taking Woodstock* DVD-1814

## **Classics**

*The Four Feathers* DVD-2284

## **Children**

*Arthur: The Good Sport* DVD-149

*Lion King* DVD-2279

*Peanuts: Snow Days* DVD-818

## **NON-FICTION**

236.1 Mar – *The Boy Who Came Back from Heaven*

796.332 Til – *The Tillman Story*

## **BOOKS ON COMPACT DISC:**

### **Fiction**

Brown, Sandra - *Lethal*

Clark, Colin – *My Week with Marilyn*

Paolini, Christopher – *Inheritance*

## **BOOK REVIEWS & RECOMMENDATIONS:**

### **By Jill:**

Polar Express by Chris VanAllsburg

The book begins on Christmas Eve night with a young boy lying in bed waiting to hear the sound of Santa Claus's sleigh bells. Suddenly, he hears a loud rumbling outside on the street as *The Polar Express* pulls up in front of his house. The boy wanders outside and is greeted by the conductor who simply says "All aboard!!" The boy enters the train and finds it is full of children all dressed in their pajamas singing Christmas carols, eating candy and drinking delicious hot chocolate.

The train travels through dark forests, up huge mountains & over the Polar Ice Cap. As the train reaches the North Pole, the children see thousands of Christmas elves gathering at the center of the city to see who will receive the first gift of Christmas.

The boy is chosen to receive the first gift. He is able to choose anything he could image. He chooses a silver bell from Santa's sleigh. The boy carefully places the bell in the pocket of his robe and everyone watches as Santa flies off to deliver all his presents.

On the train ride home, he discovers that the bell has fallen through a hole in his pocket. He is devastated that he has lost this precious gift. On Christmas morning his sister finds a package behind the tree addressed to the boy. Inside is the bell along with a note from Santa that says: "Found this on the seat of my sleigh. Fix that hole in your pocket. Signed, Mr. C." When the boy rings the bell he and his sister are amazed at the beautiful sound. His parents, however, are unable to hear the bell. The book ends with my favorite quote..."At one time most of my friends could hear the bell, but as years passed, it fell silent for all of them. Even Sarah found one Christmas that she could no longer hear its sweet sound. Though I've grown old, the bell still rings for me as it does for all who truly believe."

May you all hear that beautiful bell on this Christmas and always!!!