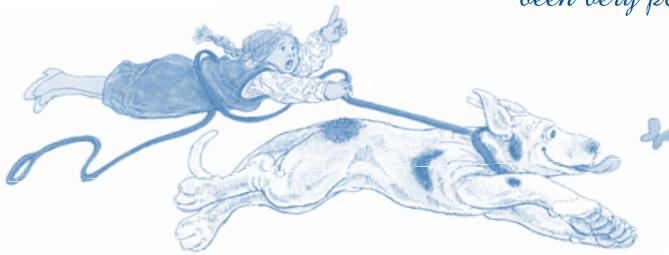


THE MAGIC MIRROR

Number 9
(February 2006)

"It is the function of some people to be a lamp and some to be a mirror. I have been very pleased to function as a mirror of others' work." — Arne Nixon



Steven Kellogg returns!

Beloved author/illustrator Steven Kellogg will speak at the Residence Dining Hall on the Fresno State campus on Monday, March 27, at 7 p.m. The evening will begin with a 5 p.m. reception and book signing, followed by a lecture and drawing demonstration at 7 p.m. He will sign again after the lecture. The Kennel Bookstore will acquire and sell books at this event.

Kellogg has written or illustrated almost 90 books, including *The Island of the Skog*, *Pecos Bill*, the *Pinkerton* series, and that favorite of librarians, *The Mysterious Tadpole*. The Arne Nixon Center owns dozens of these titles, inscribed with drawings and thanks (for promoting children's literature) to the late Professor Arne Nixon. Kellogg visited Fresno at Nixon's invitation in 1982.

Kellogg says on his Web site (www.stevenkellogg.com) "My favorite illustrators delineate their characters so that animation is implied. The individual spreads are designed so that they crackle with graphic vitality. The characters seem to speak, cavort, and leap from the page so energetically that their life and movement are totally convincing."

His own work more than fits this description. Learn more about Steven Kellogg at this free lecture, co-sponsored by Jumpstart for Young Children at California State University, Fresno; Fresno READS; the Arne Nixon Center; ANCA (Arne Nixon Center Advocates); and Associated Students. Children are welcome if accompanied by adults. Admission is free, but reservations are required by calling (559) 278-8116 or by addressing E-mail to anc@listserv.csufresno.edu. Free parking will be available starting at 5 p.m. in Lot G, located on the northeast corner of Cedar and Shaw Avenues.

Enter from Cedar via Scott Avenue, the first street north of Shaw.



Secret Garden Party in April

ANCA, the Arne Nixon Center Advocates, invites everyone to the Arne Nixon Center's fourth annual Secret Garden Party on Sunday, April 9, from 3 to 5 p.m. The party will be held in an incredible Van Ness Extension area garden, with the exact location to be revealed to underwriters and ticket holders upon registration. This year's theme is Cats, celebrating the recent gift to the Arne Nixon Center of the largest known collection of cat books in any library—more than 6,000 items donated in 2005 by the daughters of the late Helen Monnette Amestoy.

Underwriters are needed; they will receive tickets to the party and acknowledgements in promotional materials. The \$1,000 Sponsor fee includes eight tickets; Patrons, for a \$500 fee, get six tickets; Contributors, for \$250, receive four tickets. Individual tickets are also available for \$50. The garden party is ANCA's major annual fundraising event; all profits benefit the Arne Nixon Center.

For information call (559) 278-5790 or send E-mail to kelliew@csufresno.edu.



CELEBRATING CATS EVERYWHERE—
EVEN THE BAD KITTIES!

Make a date with us

March 27: Steven Kellogg

April 9: Secret Garden Party

May 16 & 17: Tour of Leo Politi's Los Angeles

Fall 2006: Alma Flor Ada & F. Isabel Campoy

Visit Leo Politi's Los Angeles with us!

(Page 2)

Visit Leo Politi's Los Angeles

The Arne Nixon Center will sponsor a bus tour from Fresno to Los Angeles and back again on Tuesday and Wednesday, May 16 and 17, to view sites connected with Leo Politi. The Caldecott-winning artist/author of *Song of the Swallows*, *Pedro: The Angel of Olvera Street*, and *Moy Moy* was born in Fresno, but lived most of his life in Los Angeles, where he wrote and illustrated many books depicting the city's multicultural neighborhoods. Take a walking tour of Olvera Street, the Los Angeles Public Library, and Chinatown. Speakers will include Ann Stalcup, author of *Leo Politi, Artist of the Angels*, and Leo Politi's children, Paul Politi and Suzanne Politi Bischof. The tour guides will be Angelica Carpenter, Curator of the Arne Nixon Center, and Denise Sciandra, President of ANCA, the Arne Nixon Center Advocates.



The price is \$275, based on double occupancy, with a single supplement of \$75. This includes a banquet and one night's stay at the New Otani Hotel in Japan Town.

Registration forms are available on the Center's Web site at www.arnenixoncenter.org or by calling (559) 278-8116 or sending E-mail to anc@listserv.csufresno.edu.

ANCA news

ANCA thanks Ebe Knapp for hosting the annual tea for life members at her home on February 16. ANCA now has 50 life members and a total of 480 members in 21 states and even one member in England.

Remembering Arne Nixon

Poet Lee Bennett Hopkins wrote recently to Curator Angelica Carpenter, about Arne Nixon: "For years and years he would come to wherever I was autographing books at conferences, stand in long lines, and always, always be his charming self. In later years, when I saw him, I'd whisk from the booth and call him aside so he wouldn't have to wait in line. Arne was a dear, wondrous gentleman."

Editor Neal Porter of Roaring Brook Press recently gave permission for the Center to use art from Nick Bruel's bestselling new picture book, *Bad Kitty*, in conjunction with the Secret Garden Party. He called Arne Nixon "a quiet, gentle, and altogether charming man, a professor of children's literature and a passionate champion of books and authors."

Tales & Tidbits from ANCA

(Arne Nixon Center Advocates)

by Denise Sciandra, ANCA President



"I never expected the hedgehog to start talking. That wasn't in the original proposal. But nevertheless, Mrs. Tiggy-winkle insisted on talking midway through my manuscript." Eventually, as author Susan Wittig Albert explained, she gave in and rewrote her book, *The Tale of Hill Top Farm*, the first volume of the Cottage Tales of Beatrix Potter Mysteries, to include dialogue for the animal characters who were accustomed to talking in Beatrix Potter's stories.

Albert says that after reading the 1989 edition of Judy Taylor's *Beatrix Potter: Artist, Storyteller and Country-woman*, she was captivated with the idea of writing a mystery series about Beatrix Potter. Eventually, *The Tale of Hilltop Farm* was published in 2004, followed by *The Tale of Holy How* in 2005. Albert plans to write a seven-book series. When deciding on which part of Potter's life to use, she chose to begin in 1905 with the death of Potter's fiancé, Norman Warne, and to end happily ever after with her marriage to William Heelis in 1913.

Albert, an established mystery writer, spoke at the Beatrix Potter Society conference, "Beatrix Potter in America," held November 4-6, 2005, at the Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art in Amherst, Massachusetts. This museum opened in November 2002 and ever since, I have wanted to visit. As a Potter fan, this was my opportunity.

The Eric Carle Museum is located in a rural setting next to the Hampshire College campus. The view from the large picture windows in the lobby exposes visitors to the beautiful and ever-changing seasons in the surrounding apple orchard, valley and wooded hills. The museum feels friendly and inviting to both children and adults. The floor plan takes visitors easily from the lobby to the galleries, library, cafeteria, museum shop, and auditorium.

Beatrix Potter's art, all from private American collections, filled one gallery. Highlights of the exhibit included excerpts from letters Potter wrote to children, family photos, first edition books, and a 1910 plush Jemina Puddleduck. I especially enjoyed seeing the original manuscript of *The Tailor of Gloucester*, my favorite of Potter's tales, and alongside it, a watercolor illustration of Simpkin looking in the shop window at the mice as he longed for a never-to-be mouse dinner.

The Eric Carle Museum more than met my expectations. Its very fine museum shop was well stocked with Beatrix Potter items, making it somewhat dangerous. I'm glad my husband didn't ask how much I spent there. In fact, he'll be happier not knowing. My pleasure was increased by seeing this new and innovative museum with ANCA members Jane Fischer, Gerry Hughes, and Brenda Martin.

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by Angelica Carpenter

CURATOR'S CORNER



School Library Journal has meant a lot to me in my career. I began reading it in the late 1970s, when I was studying children's literature in library school. I loved the feminist point of view and the connection to a wider world. I kept reading it as a branch manager of the Springfield (Missouri)-Greene County Library and later as director of the Palm Springs (Florida) Public Library. In these small libraries, everyone worked with children and teenagers. We relied on *SLJ* for news and program ideas and especially for book reviews—librarians spend their precious book budgets based on reviews.

Later, when my mother and I thought of writing a book for children, I read the reviews in a new way, to see what might sell. I studied the ads and the articles about trends. In 1990 Mother and I published *Frances Hodgson Burnett*. That was thrilling and so was the next surprise: the book got a starred review in *School Library Journal*. We celebrated all over again and, though I wasn't sure that it was proper to do so, I wrote a thank you letter to the book reviewer. Lerner Publications rushed an additional 5,000 copies of the book into print, all because of that powerful little star!

Last May, in London, I got the chance to interview the new Children's Laureate of Britain, Jacqueline Wilson. It was my first interview, but I knew what to do: I bought a tape recorder. It took me several days to transcribe the two hours spent with her. Knowing that *SLJ* now published author interviews, I studied these when I returned to Fresno. I noted two styles: a narrative article with long quotes or a question and answer format. Choosing the former, I fashioned an article according to the *SLJ* Web site, and E-mailed it to News & Features Editor Rick Margolis in July.

Months passed. I sent a couple of polite inquiries. No reply. At Thanksgiving I gave up hope and sent the article to another journal. Then on January 3rd I got a phone call:

"This is Rick Margolis," said a voice. My heart pounded!

"I'm sorry it took me so long to get back to you," he said.

"I forgive you!" I screeched and thus began an exciting week. Rick wanted the article for the February issue, or, in other words, *fast*. He wanted it recast into question and answer format. He wanted it restructured, to begin in the present, to go back to her childhood, and then to work its way forward to the present. He wanted me to re-interview the author, asking a dozen additional questions, which he provided. He wanted me to add details of the place where I interviewed her. All of this and he wanted it shorter, too!

"No problem," I said, and I went to work, cutting and pasting. I bought an adaptor for my telephone, one that worked with a tape recorder, and via Jacqueline's assistant (the famous author does not E-mail), I made a date to talk to her. One morning I called her (it was evening for her) and recorded another 45 minutes.

I worked in all the new information and finished a new draft with a whole day to spare. There was just one little problem: now it was three times too long. Rick had urged me to send it "asap," even if it was too long. "I can always trim it," he said, but maybe this was more than a trim? Oh well, I sent it off and he took it from there.

So now I am celebrating again, because of *School Library Journal*. Thanks to Rick, I had a terrific one-week, intensive course in how to write an interview. And amazingly, they are going to pay me. (I would have paid them!)

Happy reading!

Travels with Katrina

by Alan Stein



*The Arne Nixon Center welcomes Alan H. Stein, former head of the City Archives and Special Collections of the New Orleans Public Library. He is also a contract Oral Historian for the Latino Leadership Oral History project for the Regional Oral History Program at the University of California, Berkeley; a board member of the Consortium of Oral History Educators; and a contributor to **Preparing the Next Generation of Oral Historians: An Anthology of Oral History Education**, to be published by AltaMira Press in 2006.*

My last day at New Orleans Public Library was Saturday, August 27, 2005. I watched as the outer bands of Hurricane Katrina moved in and we closed the library early in the afternoon. By Sunday morning my eyes were wide open as the city's mayor announced a mandatory evacuation. I grabbed my backpack, a four-day supply of underwear and summer shirts, and hailed one of the few cabs left in Central City. As we drove past the Superdome, I noticed the first lines forming—evacuees holding pillows, blankets, and other possessions. The Louis Armstrong International Airport was closing and so I took what I could—I flew standby to Houston, then Nashville, and “home” to Chicago. A week later I did an interview with the *Chicago Journal*, optimistic that while other archives and library collections sustained severe damage, our City Archives collection (although housed in a sub-basement) miraculously escaped the flood.

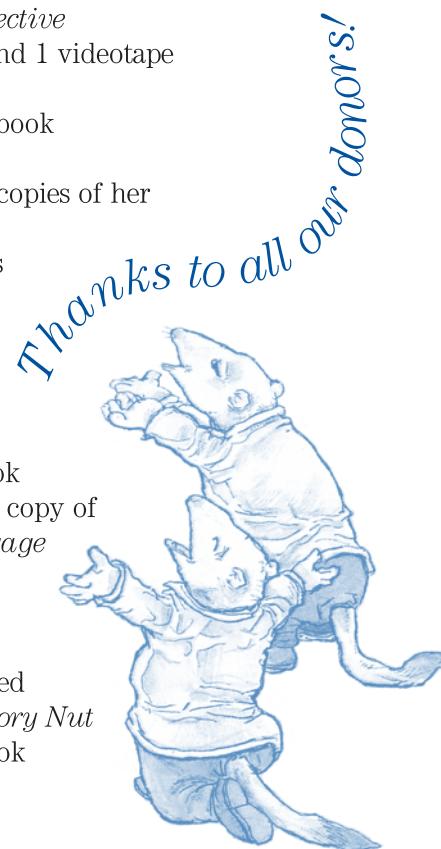
By now, millions of people have heard about the Katrina aftermath and the great displacement of approximately 1.5 million people. I was one of 200 library workers (and 3,000 City of New Orleans employees) who lost a job on October 4, 2005. When I realized I would be a Katrina evacuee for months to come, I decided to move on and applied to the Henry Madden Library. You can say I have the distinction of being the first “Katrina librarian” hired by Fresno State, but I also bear the burden of that distinction. I present papers, do interviews, and write articles about the experience but what is most important to remember is the commitment shown by Dean Michael Gorman, not only in creating a library “relief” position, but in matching my skills to the Arne Nixon Center. As a Specialist Cataloguer I am going through Nixon Center papers, manuscripts, videotapes, photographs, posters, placards, and other materials in order to inventory, organize, and preserve them for future generations.

(See *Katrina* on page 6)

Donations of books & materials

July through December 2005

Amberwood Press: 1 book
Marianne Berkes: 6 books
Janet Bochin: 3 books
Boyd's Mill Press: 16 books
Shirley Brinker: 1 book
Dr. Juan Carnero: 2 Portuguese books
Angelica Carpenter: 9 books and a cat umbrella
Michael Cart: 136 books
J. B. Cheaney: autographed copy of her book
My Friend the Enemy
Children's Book Press: 1 book
K. K. Corner: 1 book
Tom Ebert: 2 books
Epic Publishing Company: 1 book
Gretchen Holbrook Gerzina: Madame Alexander Little Lord Fauntleroy doll
Beverly Gherman: papers
Henry Holt: 30 books
Holiday House: 28 books
Houghton Mifflin: 105 books
Dr. Phyllis Irwin: 1 book
Sydney Jackson: 10 books
Barbara Kerley: autographed copy of her book
You and Me Together Again
Lerner Publications: 45 books
Diane Martineau: 1 book
Colleen Mitchell: 4 books
Stephen Mooser: autographed copy of his book
Goofball Malone, Ace Detective
Blossom Norman: 54 books and 1 videotape
Tamora Pierce: 31 books
Pomegranate Publishing: 1 book
Random House: 105 books
Moina Mary Fairon Rech: 3 copies of her Portuguese books
Roaring Brook Press: 4 books
Scholastic: 120 books
Denise Sciandra: 2 books
Vincent Smith: 1 book
Carole Snee: 5 books
Sterling Publishing: 1 book
Sunflower Publishing: 1 book
Edith Tarbescu: autographed copy of her book *Annushka's Voyage*
John Taylor: 25 books
Tricycle Press: 6 books
Dave Tyckoson: 1 book
Carol Rae Wakely: autographed copy of her book *The History Nut*
Waterwood Publishing: 1 book



The power of children's books

by Michael Gorman

*The glamour
Of childish days is upon me,
my manhood is cast
Down in the flood of remembrance,
I weep like a child for the past.*

—D.H. Lawrence, *Piano*

When asked which book had made him want to be a writer, Tom Wolfe wrote an elegant essay on how there are certain books in every writer's life that ignite the desire to write in a life-changing way. He cited, among others, Steinbeck, James M. Cain, Waugh, Mencken, Tomas Wolfe, Gay Talese, Céline, and Henry Miller as great influences in his style and the way in which he matured as a writer. For the book that "galvanized" him and made him decide to be a writer, however, Wolfe turned to an entirely different genre. That book was *Honey Bear* by Dixie Willson, illustrated by Maginel Wright Barney, published in the early 1920s. Wolfe learnedly describes the text as "rollicking and rolling rhythm: anapestic quadrameter with spondees at regular intervals." Fortunately for the rest of us who cannot grasp what this might be, he gives examples, and rollicking they are, too.

*Once upon a summer in the hills by the river
Was a deep green forest where the wild things grew.
There were caves as dark as midnight—there were tangled trees and thickets
And a thousand little places where the sky looked through.*

It is easy to see how the infant Wolfe was captivated by the rhythms, rhymes, and wordplay of such a book and how, even in the days before he could read, he decided that he wanted to be a writer. He says that *Honey Bear* made him think that writing could be magic and fun, and he, "lying illiterate on my little pillow in a tiny bed," resolved then and there to be a writer. He adds, wryly, that writing mostly turned out to be not magic and fun, but that the die was cast when he was captivated by his mother's readings long ago.

What is it about a good children's book that has such a seismic effect on so many lives? What is the special magic of children's books that we remember all our lives and that is more intense than even the most profound reading experience as an adult? I think it is that those early books are the first that transport us out of the egocentric life of a child, conjuring worlds of experience and events about which we had never dreamed. Although that magic transcends the self-centeredness of the child, it also allows that self to roam and become part of the story and the magic. We adults can read and enjoy the Harry Potter books, but there are millions of children who read and participate in the stories, not just imagining themselves in but also living in Hogwarts School.

*I will always be aware of the power
of children's books.*

*Michael Gorman is Dean of Library Services at California State University, Fresno, and President of the American Library Association. This essay is from his latest book, **Our Own Selves: More Meditations for Librarians**, published by the American Library Association in 2005, © Michael Gorman.*



In New Orleans my emphasis was on storytelling, documenting the lives of Southern Jewish orphans, war veterans, and widows. The Louisiana Division was used extensively by old and young alike, doing genealogy research and discovering their roots. Now I'm also gathering stories about Katrina. One of the families (evacuated to Florida) has a member who was manning a pump station when the levy broke. He had to wade out among bodies. These things will be important for his great-grandchildren to know. Each of the families has a story of tragedy and some degree of triumph, and certainly transformation. Gulf coast families have made their way into California to settle in the Central Valley and the Bay Area. As the Katrina diaspora continues to grow we must get the interviews before the stories become clouded by time.

Telling stories is also an essential part of Arne Nixon's experience and his legacy. When I hear his voice in diaries and journals and see it inscribed on book pages and in correspondence, I can't help but think how he would have reacted to the displaced children of Katrina. I don't know where the wind-blown path from New Orleans to Fresno will lead, but one thing is certain: there are stories that have been told and that will be retold. Some of these will one day find a home here at the Arne Nixon Center for the Study of Children's Literature.

Featured illustrations from our collections

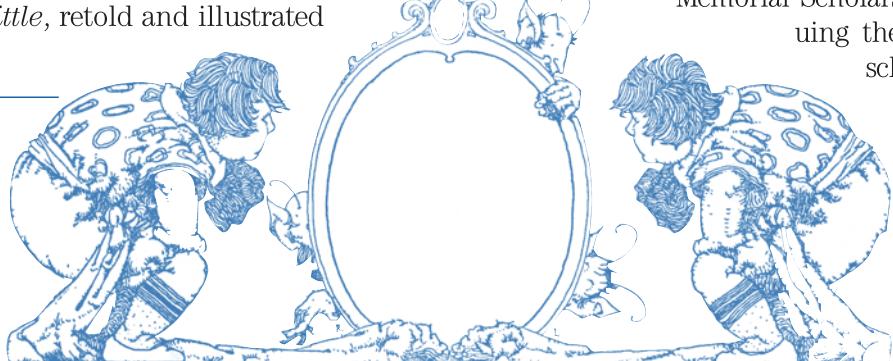
Front page: (top left) *Pinkerton, Behave!*, written and illustrated by Steven Kellogg; (right) *Bad Kitty*, written and illustrated by Nick Bruel; (bottom right) *The Poinsettia*, written and illustrated by Leo Politi.

Page 2: *The Poinsettia*

Page 4: *Aster Aardvark's Alphabet Adventures*, written and illustrated by Steven Kellogg

Page 6: *The Wonderful Adventures of Little Prince Toofat*, written by George Randolph Chester, illustrated by Robert Lawson.

Page 7: (left) *Elisabeth the Cow Ghost*, written and illustrated by William Pène Du Bois; (right) *Chicken Little*, retold and illustrated by Steven Kellogg.



Paying it forward

It seems that the people in Ellendale, North Dakota, have extremely good memories— either that or some characters are just not easily forgotten. What might have been a search for a needle in a haystack turned out to be a piece of cake with whipped cream and a cherry on top.

Arne Nixon set up a memorial scholarship fund in the School of Education at California State University, Fresno. He named it for J. C. and Pearl McMillan. Years later there was no one left in Fresno who knew who the McMillans were. With a lead from Arne Nixon's friend Dr. Maurice Eash, Jennifer Crow from the Arne Nixon Center called the Ellendale Public Library.

"Oh! Arne Nixon!" a voice cried with recognition. "He was born in Frederick, South Dakota, but let me have you speak to the librarian."

"Oh! The McMillans!" said the librarian. "Their daughter is on our library board and I have her number right here."

A chat with Barbara Redmond provided clarification. Both her father and mother, she said, had worked hard to put themselves through college. Both knew firsthand the value of an education. Her father had become president of the State Normal and Industrial College in Ellendale.

She told how Arne Nixon had caught her father's attention as a grammar school student when he gave a speech at the College as a member of the Young Citizens' League. Dr. McMillan was so impressed that he pulled the boy aside to ask about his plans to attend college. Coming from a large family on a small, remote farm, Arne had no such plans. McMillan offered to let Arne stay in his home to complete his education as long as he would help with household chores and wait tables at the dorm to earn his keep. Arne eagerly agreed, graduating from high school in Ellendale and, in 1948, from the State Normal and Industrial College with a B. S. in education. Eventually he earned a doctorate in education at Columbia University, where he met Maurice Eash.

Arne Nixon believed that the McMillans had given him his life. He created the J. C. and Pearl McMillan Memorial Scholarship as a way of continuing their legacy. In the future, scholarship recipients will receive brief biographies of Arne Nixon and his benefactors, the McMillans.



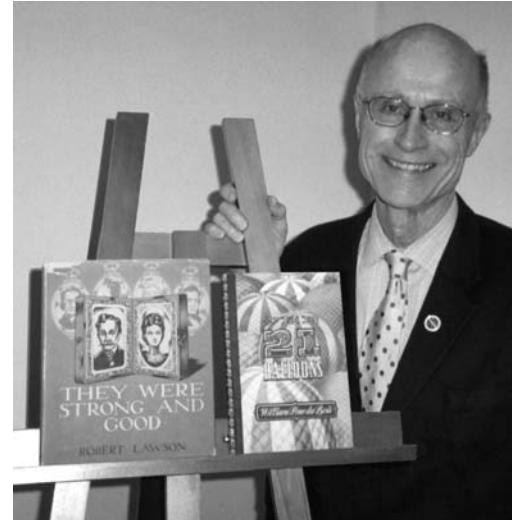
A young Arne Nixon

Michael Cart donates first editions

Thanks to Michael Cart for his most recent donation of 136 books illustrated by Robert Lawson and William Pène Du Bois. These picture books are valued at more than \$35,000.

Comments from appraiser Paul Bienvenue of March Hare Books provide a sampling of this wonderful gift. On *Elizabeth the Cow Ghost*: “Du Bois’ rare first book, and virtually unheard of in dust jacket; this is a stunning copy, perhaps the finest recorded.” The Lawson books include *The Wonderful Adventures of Little Prince Toofat* from 1922 (“the scarcest Larson, according to *Books of Wonder* . . . disavowed by the illustrator”), and *The Bride: Her Book* (“Truly the rarest Lawson book, unacknowledged by Lawson himself in later years . . . No copies registered on *WorldCat*, and none found described in an extensive library of catalogs by major dealers in children’s and illustrated literature. Thus this book greatly exceeds *The Wonderful Adventures of Little Prince Toofat* in rarity.”) The donation includes a first edition of *Four and Twenty Blackbirds* (“1st edition. The FIRST CALDECOTT MEDAL WINNER! Fine book in a Very Good+ dust jacket.”) illustrated by Robert Lawson.

Michael Cart is an author, *Booklist* columnist (“Carte Blanche”), librarian, literary talk show host, and leader in the American Library Association. As president of the Young Adult Library Services Association, he helped to establish the Michael L. Printz Award for Excellence in Young Adult Literature. As a founding member of the Arne Nixon Center’s governing board, he has helped to plan the Center from the start and now he is contributing to it with a major, ongoing donation of his papers and books.



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I/We would like to join the Arne Nixon Center Advocates and enclose a donation. (Donations are tax deductible as allowable by law.)

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 \$ 25 Sustaining membership
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Answers to quiz:

- 1 *Holes*, by Louis Sachar
- 2 *The Island of the Skog*, by Steven Kellogg
- 3 *Speak*, by Laurie Halse Anderson
- 4 *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*, by C. S. Lewis



Can you identify book titles from these first lines?

(Answers on page 7)

Q1 “There is no lake at Camp Green Lake. There once was a very large lake here, the largest lake in Texas. That was over a hundred years ago. Now it is just a dry, flat wasteland.”

Q2 “It was National Rodent Day, and Jenny decided to have a party. Hanna, Wooster, and Louise came. So did Bouncer and his buddies from the bowling alley.”

Q3 “It is my first morning of high school. I have seven new notebooks, a skirt I hate, and a stomachache.”

Q4 “Once there were four children whose names were Peter, Susan, Edmund and Lucy. This story is about something that happened to them when they were sent away from London during the war because of the air-raids.”

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