



Texas Bluebonnet Award

Winter 2009

Read Five **Then** Decide

TBA Mission

To Encourage
Texas Children to:

- Read more books
- Explore a variety of current books
- Develop powers of discrimination
- Identify their favorite books

What is Your Registration Status?

We are nearing the time when tens of thousands of Texas children will decide on their favorite 2009-10 TBA Master List nominee and cast their vote. Make sure you give your readers a chance to be heard.

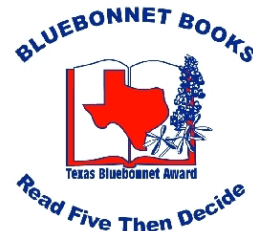
Register to vote at the link below.

<https://secure.txla.org/secure/tba/tbaselection.asp>

Each participating school or public library must register for the program. In order to vote, students must be in grades 3-6 and have read at least five of the titles on the TBA Master List for 2009-10. You will find useful information on the voting process and helpful resources at the link below.

<http://www.txla.org/groups/tba/vote.html>

Vote totals must be submitted electronically to TLA by January 31.



2009-10 Master List Announced at Texas Book Festival

Inside this issue:

[Are You Registered?](#)

[TBA at the Texas Book Festival](#)

[Youth Participants](#)

[Winning "Losers"](#)

[Name in Lights:
Richardson ISD
Katy ISD](#)

[TBA WIKI](#)

[TBA Committees](#)

[TBA 2010-11 Master List Press Release](#)



Authors Scieszka and Barnett pose with the 2010-11 TBA Master List titles, TBA Coordinator, Beth Thames and TBA Committee members

The newest Texas Bluebonnet Award reading list was released before a standing room only crowd of excited students, parents, and teachers in Austin on October 31. Popular children's authors Jon Scieszka and Mac Barnett revealed the titles one by one amid hilarious commentary. From the moment they took the stage – wearing muscle man suits under their sports jackets and introduced by TBA Coordinator Beth Thames as the "strongest authors in Texas" – the two men had the audience laughing and clapping while also flashing cameras at projected book jacket images and hurriedly writing down the new titles.

[Click this link for the annotated 2010-11 Master List.](#)

Publicity Sub-Committee:
Laura Sheneman and Brad Sveter



Youth Participant Winners Announced



Ten very lucky librarians and libraries were recently selected from over 240 applicants to bring a youth participant to the Texas Bluebonnet Award Ceremony. The ceremony will be held on Friday, April 16, 2010 during TLA's Annual Conference in San Antonio.

The random drawing to select the winners was held at Zachry Middle School, Northside ISD in San Antonio. Zachry students were thrilled to draw the lucky winners for each district. The librarian at ZMS is Lori Alexander, Texas Bluebonnet Youth Participation Chair.

Each of these winning librarians, one from each of the 10 TLA districts, will select a youth participant to present the Texas Bluebonnet Award to the winning author at the TBA Luncheon. The librarians, youth participants and parents will also attend a reception with the author in which they will have the opportunity to interview the author and discuss the winning book. **Congratulations** to the following winners:

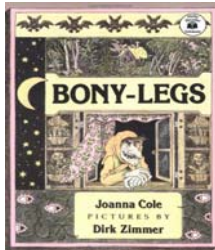


- District 1: Shawn Lane, Cisco Elementary School, Cisco
- District 2: Sharon Cooper, David Crockett Middle School, Amarillo
- District 3: Kate Slaten, Brentwood Elementary School, Austin
- District 4: Leticia Correa, Coakley Middle School, Harlingen
- District 5: Felicia Sanders-Johnson, Edward Titcher Elementary, Dallas
- District 6: Debbie Acuna, Travis Elementary School, El Paso
- District 7: Sallee Clark, Monaco Elementary School, Aubrey
- District 8: Sherri Bell, Rogers Middle School, Pearland
- District 9: Martha Jones, Shallowater Middle School, Shallowater
- District 10: Laurie Packard, St. Anthony Catholic School, San Antonio

If you didn't win this year, keep trying!! It's a wonderful opportunity for librarian, youth participant, and family!! Information packets will be sent to the winners shortly!!

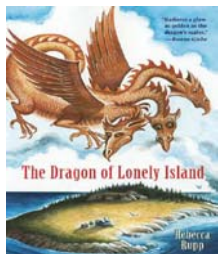
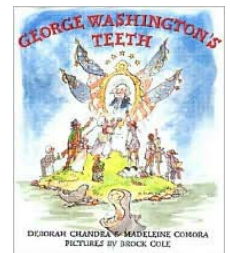
Winning “Losers”

If your library has been participating in the TBA program for any part of its history, you may have treasures in your library that may be forgotten or unknown. When I first became a librarian, there was a small budget for library books and those TBA books were sometimes the core of the purchases each year. Many of those books remain my favorites and this list reflects some of those titles that didn't win the year they were chosen, but have staying power. They are chosen and “classified” arbitrarily and reflect only the whims and experiences of this writer. Because several of them are out-of-print (OP), take a second look before you discard them.



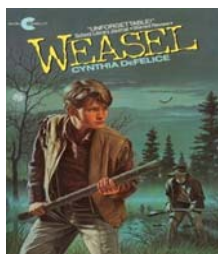
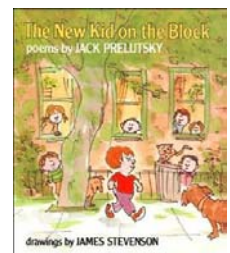
1. Best Scary Read - aloud for Primary Students: Cole, Joanna. ***Bony Legs***. (OP) If you can do a good witch's voice, you can raise kids off the seat with this Baba Yaga story. I don't show the illustrations as I read; I let the listeners conjure up their own image of the crone who lives in a house with chicken legs and likes to eat little children.

2. Best Book for February: Chandra, Deborah and Madeleine Comora. ***George Washington's Teeth***. This book covers a lot of territory: poetry, history, biography, and dental health—and just in time for President's Day, too. Children like to do a countdown as George loses his teeth.



3. Best Story Within a Story: Rupp, Rebecca. ***The Dragon of Lonely Island***. Children keep the secret of the three-headed dragon they've found in a cave and each of the heads entertains with a different story. This uncomplicated fantasy works well for those just getting into chapter books.

4. Best Introduction to a Poet: Prelutsky, Jack. ***The New Kid on the Block***. Pull this one off to read “Oh, Homework” aloud to students and—if you're musical—try singing it to “La Cucaracha” or “My Darling Clementine.” Yes, he was the first Children's Poet Laureate and there are a score of other books by him, but this one is still a hoot.



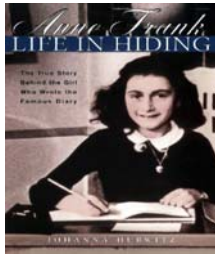
5. Best Book for Male Reluctant Readers: DeFelice, Cynthia. ***Weasel***. (OP) DeFelice has won the TBA twice, but this book is my favorite. Usually it just takes one short book talk at the first of the year to one student and the book takes off. I just say, “This book has one of the most evil characters in children's books. He cuts out people's tongues.” The book is available in paperback, and DeFelice's sequel, ***Bringing Ezra Back***, was published in 2006.

(continued)

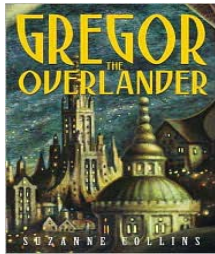
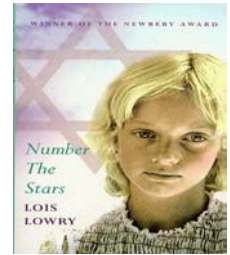
Read Five Then Decide

Winning “Losers”

(concluded)

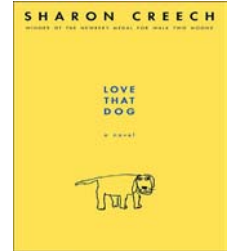


6. & 7. Best Fiction/Nonfiction Pair from the Same List (1990-91): Hurwitz, Joanna. *Anne Frank. Life in Hiding*. Lowry, Lois. *Number the Stars*. Either of these books fulfills that request I get from girls: “I want a sad book.” Together they form an introduction to the Holocaust that leads readers on a search through the library for more on the subject.



8. Best Introduction to a Series: Collins, Suzanne. *Gregor the Overlander*. Yes, maybe Riordan’s *The Lightning Thief* came to your mind first, but do not overlook this gem. This book took a while to capture an audience, but those readers awaited every sequel. The series is strong throughout all five volumes and each volume has a satisfying ending.

9. Best Novel in Verse: Creech, Sharon. *Love That Dog*. All I can say is, “Love that book!” I think students may first be attracted by its brevity and white space on the pages, but the story draws them in. My students have already found the sequel *Hate That Cat* and now both books have a waiting list.



10. Funniest Chapter in a Book: Park, Barbara. *Maxie, Rosie, and Earl—Partners in Grime*. The premise of this book is funny: three children have all been sent to the principal’s office and the children don’t really know each other. This fact doesn’t stop them from deciding to escape together. Each child is introduced in a chapter and anyone who has been in an elementary classroom will recognize Rosie and laugh out loud.

This list only skims part of the cream in so many years of good books. Which would you choose?

This guest article was written by former, two time TBA Committee Member, Charlyn Trussell.

Name in Lights...



It’s Maybelle from Katy ISD

Librarians Kathy Wendling, from Moss Haven Elementary in Richardson ISD and Barbara Jenkins from Bonnie Holland Elementary in Katy ISD you’ve got “Your Name in Lights.” They share their student’s storybook pumpkin entries, showing off two of the 2009-10 TBA Master List titles. Great job, readers!



and Mr. Mutt!
from Richardson ISD

TBA WIKI for Sharing



The TBA Wiki is up at <http://texasbluebonnetaward.pbworks.com/>.

The wiki was created based on suggestions received through TBA member surveys. Members had written that they are looking for a place where they can find TEK based lesson plans and curriculum activities to support their TBA program. It has never been the mission of TBA to focus on lessons. However, TBA recognizes the reality of teaching in today's TAKS driven environment and wants to do what it can to support teachers and librarians in their efforts. The TBA wiki is meant to be a gathering place where teachers and librarians can share curriculum activities and lesson plans that they have created for the teaching of Bluebonnet books.

Although the wiki is in its infancy, you can already discover wonderful ideas for implementing, promoting, and refining your library's TBA program. Many of the pre-conference ideas shared at the TLA convention in Houston are posted in the "Tips and Tricks" folder on the wiki. You will find navigation simple when you read the wiki pages. Each page gives a brief description of the activities and files posted and provides links to take you to those you find interesting.

If you have files or ideas that you would like to contribute please e-mail Brad Sveter (rsveter@aldine.k12.tx.us) or Laura Sheneman (les024@shsu.edu). You can directly comment on the wiki pages when you log in to pbworks. If you do not have an account, you can register for a free account at <https://my.pbworks.com/?p=create>. Show us what you are doing to promote and teach your TBA program and let us share your work with the teachers and librarians of Texas.

TBA Committee Members



Program Committee Members

Front to Back, Left to Right, TBA Coordinator, Beth Thames, Amy Fuller, Lori Alexander, TBA Coordinator Intern, Martha Edmundson, Cindy Boatfield, Dixie Allen, Allison Wilson, Laura Sheneman, Brad Sveter, Felice Feldman, Nicki Stohr, Not Pictured Andrea L. Wright-Young



Selection Committee Members

Front to Back, Left to Right, Ophelia Barrera, TBA Coordinator, Beth Thames, TBA Coordinator Intern, Martha Edmundson, Hilary Haygood, Trina Smith, Cindy Walker, Richard McGowan, Patricia Arnold, Andrea Naismith, Mary Helton, Maria Medina and Irasema Rosas



Texas Bluebonnet Award

2009-10 TBA Master List Press Release

It takes a mixture of materials to make a strong, exciting Texas Bluebonnet Award (TBA) Master List. The foundation is well-written children's literature. The walls are made up of a variety of genre; thus giving each room a different décor. The roof is the authors and illustrators who top the list with their expertise. Once complete the TBA Master List is a place where the 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 6th grade children of Texas want to spend some quality time. The 2010-2011 TBA Master List has all the needed materials to welcome a lot of visitors to its front door.

The best places are those places full of laughter. This Master List has no shortage of giggles. Author Will Claflin writes the story of *The Uglified Ducky*, as told to him by Maynard Moose. A baby moose falls asleep next to a nest of hatching duckies. When mother ducky returns to her nest of babies she is not sure what to do with her uglified ducky. James Stimson's illustrations add to the hilarity. Anabel's dream of making a dress for Princess Isabella Caramella Gorgonzola will come true if she can keep the Hinky Pink from keeping her awake each night with its cover stealing ways. Laughs abound with Megan McDonald's retelling and Brian Floca's drawings in *The Hinky Pink: An Old Tale*.

The antics of Squirrel as he tries to help his friends will be fun, fun, fun for early readers. *Squirrel's World* by Lisa Moser will keep smiles on the reader's face from beginning to end. Gary Paulsen knows how to put the humor in a story and he does it again in *Mudshark*. This book has the added benefit of being a mystery. With a real estate agent Anita Sale and publisher Paige Turner the reader knows immediately that there will be chuckles aplenty in Kate Klise's book, *Dying to Meet You: 43 Old Cemetery Road*. This story told through snail mail, email, and newspaper articles doesn't just have laughs, it has a ghost. Humor is often found in the unexpected. Linda Sue Park introduces the Korean poetry form Sijo in the book *Tap Dancing on the Roof*. One characteristic of this form of poetry is the twist in the last line. The joy exploring Sijo poetry is as unexpected as the ending of these poems.

Life is not all fun and games. Sometimes bad things happen. Annie Richards knows dangers lurk around every corner. Since her brother died, she is determined she will be safe. Through the quirkiness of Annie, Lisa Graff brings a mixture of joy and sadness in the book, *Umbrella Summer*. In the book *11 Birthdays* we learn that birthdays are fun, but Amanda just wants her eleventh birthday to be over. Since they share the same birthday, she and her best friend have always had joint a joint birthday party. Not this year. The best friends are now ex-best friends. Unfortunately for both of them, each day when they wake up their eleventh birthday begins again. The author Wendy Mass combines realistic fiction with fantasy to keep the reader enthralled.

The world's oceans are featured in several of this year's Master List titles. Steve Jenkins serves as both author and illustrator in *Down Down Down: A Journey to the Bottom of the Sea*. Unusual sea creatures from the surface to its deepest depths are introduced. The man responsible for increasing knowledge of Earth's oceans is portrayed in the picture book biography *The Fantastic Undersea Life of Jacques Cousteau* written and illustrated by Dan Yaccarino. The ocean was the science laboratory



Texas Bluebonnet Award

Winter 2009

2009-10 TBA Master List Press Release *(concluded)*

for Cousteau, but to Hawaiian, Duke Kahanamoku, it was his playground. Ellie Crowe's text and Richard Waldrep's illustrations bring the life of "The Father of Modern Surfing" to the reader in *Surfer of the Century*. Hawaii is featured in another selection--*Calvin Coconut Trouble Magnet*. Graham Salisbury's first book about this nine-year-old boy who seems to attract trouble wherever he goes will delight readers of all ages.

Oceans are places of recreation and are teeming with interesting life, but oceans can be places of danger as well. Through both words and pictures Dan Brown takes the reader on the Titanic's first and final voyage. *All Stations! Distress!: April 15, 1912: The Day the Titanic Sank* tells the true story of all events that caused this disaster. The ocean's dangers also come in the form of criminals at sea. In *Pirates*, David L. Harrison's poetry and Dan Burr's illustrations give an honest depiction of the life these men and women led.

Reading Master List titles enables the reader to travel to other states, other countries and even other dimensions. Heather Henson and David Small take the reader to Kentucky's Appalachian mountain in the 1930s with their book *That Book Woman*. Thanks to the efforts of a Pack Horse Librarian, Cal discovers why his sister keeps her "nose a-twixt the pages of a book". Bohemia is the setting for the fantasy *The Cabinet of Wonders*. Marie Rutkoski keeps the reader turning the pages as Petra goes to Prague to get her father's eyes back. Another country is highlighted in the historical fiction picture book, *Sparrow Girl*, which tells of China's Great Sparrow War in 1958. This hopeful story of how one child can make a difference is further portrayed with text by Sara Pennypacker and illustrations by Yoko Tanaka.

Told in the voice of Wilson Kimeli Naiyomah by author Carmen Agra Deedy, *14 Cows for America* is a story of empathy and sacrifice. Thomas Gonzalez creates the African countryside with his vibrant illustrations. Though *Home of the Brave's* setting is Minnesota, Kek has just arrived from Africa. With its snowy winter and strange language, it is America that is the new country. With poetic text, Katherine Applegate tells of Kek's immigrant experience.

If mythical mysterious places are of more interest to readers, then *Jake Ransom and the Skull King's Shadow* by James Rollins is the book that will take them to that world. Jake and his sister Kady travel through time to a world inhabited by people from all ancient civilizations. Adding to the excitement of this strange land is the shadowy Skull King. If he has to kill Jake and Kady to get what he wants, so much the better.

The building of the 2010-2011 TBA Master List is complete and the welcome mat is officially out. Please, come in.

Read Five Then Decide