



Community Connections

**News for the Schools
from the Monson Free Library**

December 2009

Character Education

The library is helping to promote Quarry Hill's "Character Education" initiative by creating a display of related books and materials highlighting the character trait being studied each month.

Through December 18, we have a display in the Children's Room exploring friendship. Teachers are welcomed and encouraged to use our resources to supplement lesson plans!

Take Advantage of Your Public Library

We are here to reinforce what you are teaching. Please let us know your homework assignments and classroom initiatives. As budgets get tighter and services are reduced we need to partner and share resources. We are asking you to take advantage of us!!

Alert us to your homework assignments in advance. We can make displays and/or create a "reserve" shelf for assignments.

Let us know what you are studying and the type of resources you need. We are state mandated to spend 19% of our operating budget on acquisitions. We would like to purchase items you can use!

Would you like us to visit your classroom? Help with databases? Do a library card drive? Create a reading list? Do you need a deposit collection of books for your class? Just ask! Contact me at :
Hbodwell@cw mars.org or call us at 267-3866.

Annual Holiday Story Hour with Senator Brewer!

Friday, December 18 at 3:30, join us at the Library for this festive yearly event complete with holiday music and refreshments. For kids of all ages!

The Winter Olympics are Coming!

Just arrived is the Winter Olympic Sports Series! This 8 part series will teach children the history and fascinating facts about each winter Olympic sport. This 8 part series is complete with "Did you know" facts, photos and stories as well as a feature section on the 2010 Olympic Games in Vancouver. Get your students excited now!

Current Library Hours and Contact Information:

Monday Closed

Tuesday & Thursday 2:00—8:00

Wednesday 10:00-6:00

Friday 10:00—2:00

Saturday 10:00—2:00

Phone 413-267-3866

Fax 413-267-5496

Hope's email: hbodwell@cw mars.org

Website www.monsonlibrary.com

Blog <http://monsonfreelibrary.blogspot.com>

Databases of the Month

TumbleBook Library for Beginning Readers

TumbleBookLibrary is an online collection of TumbleBooks – animated, talking picture books which teach kids the joy of reading in a format they'll love. TumbleBooks are created by adding animation, sound, music and narration to existing picture books in order to produce an electronic picture book which you can read, or have read to you.

The TumbleBookLibrary is a collection of licensed titles from children's book publishers such as **Simon & Schuster, Chronicle Books, Candlewick Press, Charlesbridge Press, Harcourt, Little Brown, Walker & Company, Lerner Books**, amongst others.

The TumbleBookLibrary provides **enrichment to students who are reading independently** with a variety of high interest material. It also provides **support to students who require skill building** with a variety of exercises that can be matched with other areas of the curriculum. In general, TumbleBooks are a **great addition to a reading program** that can be worked on independently by each student or by the whole class. It has been exceptionally well received by ESL and Special Education teachers.

To access TumbleBooks all you need o to our webiste, www.monsonlibrary.com and click on “On-line Databases”. Scroll down the page to TumbleBooks. Just click and you’re there!

New at your Library—Elementary Level Series to Inspire Reading

For our youngest students just beginning to read, check out the 12 book series ***Dear Dragon*** by Margaret Hilert. For 40 years, a boy and his pet dragon have captured the imaginations of early readers. From the book jacket, “These beginning-to-read books provide practice reading high frequency words in context...and offer the opportunity to expand oral language and develop comprehension. Complete with activities, word lists and notes to caregivers.” Some titles include Merry Christmas, Dear Dragon, Come to School, Dear Dragon, and A Friend for Dear Dragon.

Two New Matt Christopher Series!

Check out ***The New Peach Street Mudders*** Series by Matt Christopher. These nine baseball-related books are perfect for the students beginning to read chapter books. Some titles include All-Star Fever, The Catcher’s Mask, The Spy on Third Base, and Stranger in Right Field.

For those 4th graders, try ***The New Matt Christopher Sports Library***. This 6 book series is more advanced than the Peach Street Mudders yet still has all the appeal kid’s love about Christopher’s books. Some titles include Snowboard Showdown, Soccer Halfback, and Mountain Bike Mania.

Two Recommended Reads for High School Students (and Teachers too!)

Both titles recommended below are wonderful reads that should prompt much discussion. There is appeal for both genders and might inspire the reluctant male reader. I have included reviews from School Library Journal for each title.

Flight by Sherman Alexie

If you have not yet read Sherman Alexie you are in for a treat. I had the opportunity to hear him lecture at a conference I attended. He is a fascinating individual. A very sickly boy, he grew up on a reservation but attended a public high school. Life on the reservation was poor and difficult and fighting was the only way to resolve conflict. While attending high school he quickly found out that fighting was not how you solved problems. He is a talented author that can weave together the two worlds he belongs to....and struggles with.

From SLJ: "Adult/High School— Both victim and victimizer, and roaming through 150 years of American history, 15-year-old Zits is a tough, emotionally beleaguered foster kid, half Indian, half Irish, and, at the story's outset, completely hopeless. The acne sores and scars on his body reveal the state of his soul. Things get better—and much worse—when he consorts with a slightly older boy who calls himself Justice, and takes up the role of serial killer. However, his deadly intent sends Zits back in time, where he variously experiences life as an FBI agent pursuing Indian activists, a 19th-century Indian boy made mute by a white man's weapon, an Indian tracker working for the U.S. Cavalry at the time of Custer, and even his own drunken father at the age of 50. Alexie uses just enough magical realism to keep the story flowing between satire and fantasy, making this an ideal choice for fans of Kurt Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse-Five* Francisca Goldsmith, Berkeley Public Library, CA"

I am the Messenger by Markus Zusak

I happened to pick up this book after someone had returned it and it was waiting to be shelved. The brief description sounded intriguing. A 19 year old cabbie, on his own and living with his coffee-drinking dog, stops a bank robbery and his life changes forever. Read it first to determine if it is appropriate for your students since it confronts some difficult issues and situations.

From SLJ: "Gr 9 Up-Nineteen-year-old cabbie Ed Kennedy has little in life to be proud of: his dad died of alcoholism, and he and his mom have few prospects for success. He has little to do except share a run-down apartment with his faithful yet smelly dog, drive his taxi, and play cards and drink with his amiable yet similarly washed-up friends. Then, after he stops a bank robbery, Ed begins receiving anonymous messages marked in code on playing cards in the mail, and almost immediately his life begins to swerve off its beaten-down path. Usually the messages instruct him to be at a certain address at a certain time. So with nothing to lose, Ed embarks on a series of missions as random as a toss of dice: sometimes daredevil, sometimes heartwarmingly safe. He rescues a woman from nightly rape by her husband. He brings a congregation to an abandoned parish. The ease with which he achieves results vacillates between facile and dangerous, and Ed's search for meaning drives him to complete every task. But the true driving force behind the novel itself is readers' knowledge that behind every turn looms the unknown presence—either good or evil—of the person or persons sending the messages. Zusak's characters, styling, and conversations are believably unpretentious, well conceived, and appropriately raw. Together, these key elements fuse into an enigmatically dark, almost film-noir atmosphere where unknowingly lost Ed Kennedy stumbles onto a mystery—or series of mysteries—that could very well make or break his life.—Hillias J. Martin, New York Public Library Copyright 2005 Reed Business Information."