

## Young Adult Round Table

# YART Connections

Volume 1, Issue 3

January 2009

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

<b>Teen Tech Week</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Thin Reads</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Connections</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>iTeens</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Poetry Programs</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>People Profile</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Technology Tip</b>	<b>5</b>

### Join the YART Google Group!

Get ideas from other librarians. Find out what is happening throughout the state. Keep up with YART news and trainings.

All you need to do is e-mail [utahyart@gmail.com](mailto:utahyart@gmail.com) and you will be added to the Google Group.

## New Utah YA Author: Emily Wing Smith

### Why did you choose to be a YA writer?

I've always wanted to be a writer, and I always wanted to write the kind of books that I was reading (or were being read to me). At age five I wanted to write and illustrate picture books, at age eight I wanted to write chapter books, at age eleven I wanted to write the next *Babysitters Club*. I guess when I started reading young adult fiction, I stopped wanting to read or write anything else! In fact, while I still read some books for adults, I prefer YA.

### Why did you choose Utah as the setting for *The Way He Lived*?

It was always clear to me that I wanted to set *The Way He Lived* in a predominantly LDS community. I wanted to explore the way death affects characters with different degrees of the same belief.

I also knew that, to some extent, the story demanded to be set in Utah. The how and why of Joel's death (on a Boy Scout hiking trip, from dehydration) are central to *The Way He Lived*. In many Utah communities, due largely to the LDS influence, a high percentage of teenage boys are Scouts. Most Utah residents have heard at least one story of a scouting accident. When I began writing this book, and people asked to hear the premise, Utahans nodded knowingly when I told them about Joel's death. Those from elsewhere in the country,

however, almost always challenged me, saying a boy could never die in such a manner.

### How do you come up with the ideas and characters for your novel?

Usually, I take the ideas for my stories directly from my life—from things that have happened to me or to people I care about. I'm an embellisher by nature, so although events are often lifted straight from reality, they become fictional as I write them down.

Every character I write about shares certain traits with me—often traits I don't like about myself. Sometimes, I'll sprinkle in traits of other people I know. But most often, I will hear characters talk to me, and tell me to write their stories. So I do.

### Who are your favorite authors?

As I said earlier, I read mostly young adult fiction, so most of my favorite authors write YA. I'm a huge fan of our local YA authors. I, like practically everybody else in the YA world, love John Green. Some of my lesser-known favorites are Laura and Tom McNeal and Adele Griffin.

### What was your favorite book(s) as a teen?

I loved books by M.E. Kerr, and still do. As a teen, I loved feeling like somebody "got" me, and I felt that way with her books. I liked basically anything YA that was thought-



provoking and based in the real world (I still don't read much sci-fi/fantasy). Of course, I wasn't above reading a little *Babysitters Club* if I needed escape!

### Do you visit schools or libraries?

Yes, I love to visit groups, either just to talk or to offer writing workshops. Currently the best way to arrange this is by contacting me directly at [emilywingsmith@gmail.com](mailto:emilywingsmith@gmail.com), or through my website, [www.emilywingsmith.com](http://www.emilywingsmith.com).

### What are you working on now?

I recently sold my second YA novel, *Back When You Were Easier to Love*, to Penguin. It's set in Haven, the same fictional town as *The Way He Lived*, and is the story of a girl who struggles to reclaim her life post-breakup by finding her ex-boyfriend. I can't say anymore than that, because I haven't finished writing it yet!



# Teen Tech Week: March 8-14, 2009

By Kara Pearson,  
Sandy Library

The theme for Teen Tech Week 2009 is Press Play @ the Library.

Can't figure out what to do? Here are some ideas to get you started.

## Book Trailer Contest

Have a contest where the teens create and submit a book trailer for their favorite books.

This could work for music videos too.

## Gaming Tournament

What better way to celebrate technology then gaming?

## Texting Challenge

Teens can show off their text messaging skills by speed or by correctly identifying the correct meaning.

## Internet Scavenger Hunt

Have teens complete an internet scavenger hunt, in which they use a combination of suggested resources to answer all sorts of questions whether educational or entertainment based search questions.

## Bingo Blackout

A fun way to involve teens is to play Bingo Blackout. Have them perform certain tasks until they complete all of the squares. Some of the tasks could be: add something to an article on wikipedia, email a YA author on their myspace page, and download an e-book or an e-audio book.

Have prizes for those that finish.

## Voting

Teens can vote for their favorite movies, songs, or video games from 2008. Post the results at the end for

every one to see.

## Morphing Photos

Who are these famous faces? Morph the faces of favorite celebrities, musicians, and authors with morphing.com.

## Techno Jewelry

Use discarded items such as computer parts and have the teens fashion their own jewelry out of the parts.

## Poster Polls

Put up posters with a single question and have the teens answer for all to see.

For more ideas visit:

[http://wikis.ala.org/yalsa/index.php/Press\\_Play\\_Activity\\_Ideas](http://wikis.ala.org/yalsa/index.php/Press_Play_Activity_Ideas)



## Thin Reads

by Stephanie Bertin,  
Kearns Library

Looking for good books to suggest to your reluctant teen readers? Check out these shorter books for teens that will keep them hooked.

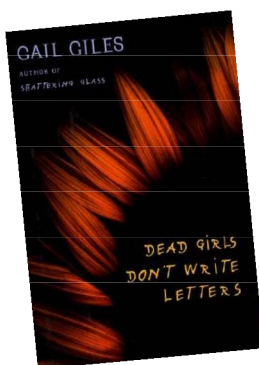


**A Bad Boy Can Be Good for a Girl** by Tanya Lee Stone (228 pages).

**A Boy at War** by Harry Mazer (104 pages).

**Acceleration** by Graham McNamee (210 pages).

**Across the Nightingale Floor: The Sword of the Warrior** by Lian Hearn (193 pages).



**Dead Girls Don't Write Letters** by Gail Giles (136 pages).

**Fame, Glory, and Other Things on My To-Do List** by Janette Rallison (186 pages).

**Freak the Mighty** by

Rodman Philbrick (169 pages).

**Something Upstairs** by Avi (116 pages).

**Squashed** by Joan Bauer (194 pages).

**Stuck in Neutral** by Terry Trueman (114 pages).

**The Rifle** by Gary Paulsen (105 pages).

**Don't You Dare Read This, Mrs. Dunphry** by Margaret Peterson Haddix (108 pages).

**Make Lemonade** by Virginia Euwer Wolff (200 pages).

**Hanging on to Max** by Margaret Bechard (142 pages).



## Creating Connections: Sharing Your Favorite 2008 YA Book

### Melinda Barlow, Uintah County Library

*The Book Thief* by Markus Zusak. I loved this book I know it is not a 2008 book but is still a great read. We did it as a book Club book and all who attended love it. I served Pea Soup as the food for the day. We should have done altered books as a follow up activity. Would have been great. I guess this was an after thought activity.

### Brooke Young, Salt Lake City Library

*Tender Morsels* by Margo Lanagan and *The Astonishing Life of Octavian Nothing, Traitor to the Nation, Volume II: The Kingdom on the Waves* by M.T. Anderson. Both are so much more than just books.

### Brooke Kowalczyk Davis County Library

*Alfred Kropp: The Thirteenth Skull* by Rick Yancey. Third book in the Alfred Kropp series. Fast paced with humor, all-too-human Alfred struggles with moral dilemmas brought about by his trying to stay alive and do the right thing. It's a technological spy thriller with a touch of fantasy.

### Carrie Rogers-Whitehead, Kearns Library

This is a hard decision but my favorite was *Three Little Words: a memoir* by Ashley Rhodes-Carter. It's a story of a girl growing up being tossed from one

home to another in foster care. It was written by Ashley after she was finally adopted after being abused in one of the foster care families. It's a nonfiction biography that really shows how people can overcome great odds.

### Dorothy Horan, Family Search

"I really liked *Breaking Dawn*, even the end, but I think I'm leaning towards the latest Rick Riordan book, *The Battle of the Labyrinth*."

### Deborah Smith Cullison, Weber County Library

*Graceling* by Kristin Cashore.

### Allison Madsen, South Jordan Library

*Unwind* by Neal Shusterman. In a future world where those between the ages of thirteen and eighteen can have their lives "unwound" and their body parts harvested for use by others, three teens go to extreme lengths to uphold their beliefs--and, perhaps, save their own lives.

*My Bonny Light Horseman* by L.A. Meyer. Fans of Jacky Faber are rejoicing at her return. Jacky Faber is finally headed to England to see what awaits her . . . most likely the hangman's noose. Unexpectedly, the ship she is on is captured by the French and Jacky is imprisoned and beheaded. . . well, at least that is what the British Intelligence Service want the world to believe. This

allows Jacky to be sent as a spy into France.

### Samantha Hastings, West Jordan Library

I loved *Chalice* by Robin McKinley and found myself craving honey after reading it. I also really enjoyed *A Curse as Dark as Gold* by Elizabeth C. Bunce.

### Kara Pearson, Sandy Library

*The Wrath of the Bloodeye* by Joseph Delaney (book 5 in the *Last Apprentice* series).

### Trudi Cooper, Davis County Library

I really enjoyed the title *Here There Be Dragons* by James A Owen. It was published in 2007. The second book in the series *Chronicles of the Imaginarium Geographica*, *The Search for the Red Dragon* was published this year. There is non-stop action as John, Jack, and Charles learn through trial and error that they are caretakers of the Imaginarium and others are out to get it from them. There are references to popular classic authors in a clever way.

**April's issue: Please share your tips and experiences working with teens. E-mail them to [utahyart@gmail.com](mailto:utahyart@gmail.com) by March 25, 2009.**

## iTeens

By Diane Marsh,  
Pleasant Grove Library

The iTeen group at Pleasant Grove City Library spent an adventurous November afternoon participating in a Photo Scavenger hunt. The teens were divided into teams of six with an adult accompanying each group. The list of 16 items to photograph, included someone in a uniform and something you'd see in a Disney movie.

This led one group to the police

station where the dispatcher good naturedly let us take her picture. The Disney movie item was more difficult but the teens decided to borrow an apple in the grocery store and act out the poison apple scene from *Sleeping Beauty*.

A good book was also on the list and was one of the easiest items to find.

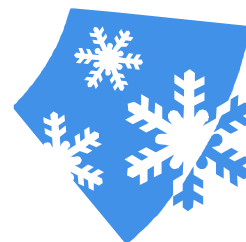
The actual hunt took about 40 minutes and they were able to find

everything in a two block radius of the library. Our rules included staying

together and only crossing streets at a light in a cross walk.

After the teams returned to the library we downloaded the pictures on to a laptop computer to share the pictures with the group. Cheese sauce was waiting in a crock pot so we could warm up with nachos for our refreshments.

We had a prize for the first group back with all their pictures. We have found the teens are happy with even a small item if they are acknowledged with a prize.





## Poet-Tree Programs

By Patricia Foster,  
Whitmore Library

April is National Poetry Month and a perfect time to try out some poetry activities with teens. You can do something as simple as a "poet-tree" or go for an open mic night, a poetry slam, or a poetry party.

A "Poet-Tree" can be some kind of "fake" tree, or you can use branches from a real tree. Since spring is pruning season, and in my yard the elm trees are trying to take over the world, I usually hack off a branch and stick it in a large pot, then fill the pot with rocks (lava rocks are lightest) to anchor the branch.

Next you can take green colored paper (all shades of green, except very dark, because you want teens to put poems on them and the writing won't show up well) and make a bunch of leaves.

Put the blank leaf shapes in a basket or box, add pencils and tape, then invite teens to share their own poetry or their favorites. You can put a few leaves on the tree yourself at first, so teens will get the idea. Put the tree in a well-traveled area, or your teen area, if you have one. You should check the tree once in while for inappropriate poems, plus it's just fun to read them. Keep the best ones and you can use them to start your poet-tree for next year!

A **Poetry Party** can be an event where you have a variety of activities. Invite teens to dress up-costumes, or formal party wear- and decorate the room with colorful pages of poetry, and books of poetry. Teens tend to like poetry written by other teens more than the "classics". Provide paper and pens at the tables, too, and some refreshments, like popcorn and pretzels, soft drinks and bottled water. Gummy bears are always popular and can also be the basis for an idea for a poem.

Teens can create their own poetry on the spot, or try group poems where one person starts the poem by writing a line, folding the paper over so the writing is covered, and the next person adds another line, until everyone has

written a line. Then you unfold the paper and read the creation out loud. This is a lot of fun and sometimes the poem is very funny, or oddly enough makes sense,

or is just totally nonsensical. Teens love to do this, and it's a good icebreaker when no one wants to be the first to stand up and read a poem.

You can give them a topic to write about and then compare everyone's poem. Many teens may bring their own poetry; encourage them to share it. If they don't want to read their own poetry, maybe one of their friends will do it for them, or they can read from a poetry book you have on display at your event.

A **Poetry Slam** requires a bit more structure and at least about a dozen participants, including judges. Have teens register ahead of time to participate, and provide them with the basic rules. You can have several rounds of poetry- at least 3, or more, if you'd like or have a lot of poets sign up; poems should be no longer than a page or two, and each poet should prepare several poems ahead of time. You can stipulate whether the poems are published works, or original material by the poet. Original poems work best and are the most fun. You can also have an extemporaneous round (or two) where they are given a topic and 5 minutes to write a poem using that topic or word.

Other teens are the best judges- you need to have at least 5 teens to judge. Just choose them from the audience, or ask teens ahead of time to be a judge. You can have them sign up ahead of time, too. Prepare score

cards on 8x10 paper, with scores from 1 to 10, and for the very picky, one for half a point (.5) which they can add to other numbers. Give the score cards to the judges. It's also great if you have badges or pins indicating who the judges are, and it's also nice to make up colorful "Poet" pins to give to all the teens who participate in the slam.

After each teen presents his or her poem, give the judges about 30 seconds to decide on a score (really, that is long enough when everyone is waiting!), and then have all the judges hold up their cards at the same time. You will need someone to write down the scores and keep track of each round.

You can either drop the lowest scoring poets in each round, or what I think is better, is to add the scores for each round, and the last round will be the top-scoring poets only, to decide the winners. You can have as many or few final-round poets as you wish.

After the first round, make sure that in the next round, the poets go in reverse order, and so on, so the same people are not first or last each round. Scoring tends to be higher at the end of a round than at the beginning!

Whatever you decide to do, just be casual and flexible, and let the teens determine the direction that the poetry activities take. Don't worry too much about rules- most teens will govern themselves, but you can make a few basic ground rules if you are worried about language or topics. Use lots of publicity to get the word out and then enjoy the creativity of your teens!

Questions? Email [pfoster@slcolibrary.org](mailto:pfoster@slcolibrary.org)





Samantha Hastings, Chair  
shastings@slcolibrary.org  
Kara Pearson, Vice-Chair  
kpearson@slcolibrary.org

Deborah Smith, Secretary  
dsmith@weberpl.org  
Allison Madsen, Webmaster  
amadsen@slcolibrary.org

## YOUNG ADULT ROUND TABLE

Utah Library Association

Check out our WIKI:  
[www.utahyart.pbwiki.com](http://www.utahyart.pbwiki.com)

## YART Connections: People Profile

Youth Services Coordinator/Consultant

Utah State Library

[sludington@utah.gov](mailto:sludington@utah.gov)

Susan Ludington

I graduated with my MLIS degree from the University of Washington in Seattle in 2002 and, for the past 6 years, have specialized in teen and children's services at Seattle Public Library, Deschutes (OR) Public Library, and most recently, Multnomah (OR) County Library. I moved to Utah for a challenging new position with the State Library, and now enjoy living close to downtown Salt Lake City. Hobbies include daily crossword-puzzling, walking/hiking/exploring, and hardware jewelry-making. Some favorite YA authors include M.T. Anderson, An Na, Kevin Brooks, Ellen Wittlinger, Ned Vizzini, and Carol Plum-Ucci. Two books I read in 2008 that still stand out on the last day of the year are *Audrey, Wait!* by Robin Benway and *Living Dead Girl* by Elizabeth Scott.



Want to write an article or  
advertise an event?

Just e-mail your idea or article to:  
[utahyart@gmail.com](mailto:utahyart@gmail.com)

## Technology Tip

**"What good books have you read lately?"**

Are there times when you are reading so much that you can't remember what you read yesterday? If so, then try keeping track of the books you read and what you thought of them using an online tool such as LibraryThing or GoodReads. I personally prefer GoodReads; but both services are free, they allow you to keep track of your books, evaluate them, and see what other 'friends' are reading. I have shared this tool with my teen readers, some of whom go through 10+ books a week, as a way to keep track of what they are reading.

Come and find me on  
[www.Goodreads.com](http://www.Goodreads.com) or  
[www.Librarything.com](http://www.Librarything.com). Search for  
Allison Madsen or  
[bookgirlut@gmail.com](mailto:bookgirlut@gmail.com).

