

OCTOBER IS HERSTORY MONTH

Although most people focus on the other holiday that starts with an H this month, I thought it would be wonderful to talk about Women's Herstory month in relation to books for children and youth. It is very important that we recognize books and stories that present girls and women as strong and resourceful characters. *"Everything we read constructs us, makes us who we are, by presenting our image of ourselves as girls and women, as boys and men* (Mem Fox, 1993). We've all grown up hearing tales of the princess or damsel in distress, forever being rescued by the daring and gallant prince. For a change, let's take a look at some of those females in literature that have the strength, courage and wits to make things happen on their own. Remember that boys should be encouraged to read these books too, to see strong girls and women in action.

- **ANNIE ROSE IS MY LITTLE SISTER** By Shirley Hughes
Shirley Hughes is my favourite author of picture books for young children. In this book Alfie describes all the things he and his little sister do together. (Ages 1-5)
- **GIRL, YOU'RE AMAZING!** By Virginia Kroll
A rollicking rhyme book about all the amazing things girls can do. (Ages 2 and up)
- **SHY MAMA'S HALLOWEEN** by Anne Broyles
An unusual Halloween book. A family of recent Russian immigrants prepares for their first Halloween. Mama is shy and afraid of the holiday, but when Papa falls ill, she agrees to take the kids out trick-or-treating. Gradually, as she puts on bits of the children's costumes, which they are tired of wearing, she assumes her own disguise, and comes to enjoy this strange holiday. A touching story. (Ages 5-8)
- **THE PRINCESS WHO DANCED WITH CRANES** by Annette LeBox
A tale with an environmental theme. Princess Vivian loves to play in the marsh near her castle, and especially to see the cranes. But when everyone in the kingdom goes crazy for a new game called Gullywhupper, they fill in the marsh for more lawn to play on. Eventually, Vivian remembers the marsh and the cranes, and convinces her father and others to restore the marsh. Lovely illustrations. (Ages 4-7)
- **THE PAPER BAG PRINCESS** by Robert Munsch
Princess Elizabeth wears expensive clothes and plans to marry Prince Ronald. When a dragon burns up her castle and clothes and carries Ronald away, Elizabeth dons a paper bag to rescue him. She outwits the dragon

and enters its lair, but Prince Ronald turns up his nose at her attire. She promptly leaves him to his fate. (Ages 4-7)

- **TATTERHOOD AND OTHER TALES** by Ethel Johnston Phelps
Fun, absorbing tales featuring strong, brave, and/or clever girls and women. These are not made-up tales—they are actual folk tales from around the world that the author has discovered. A rich treasury for family reading. (Ages 5 and up)
- **HOW COME THE BEST CLUES ARE ALWAYS IN THE GARBAGE?** By Linda Bailey.
This is the 1st book in the Stevie Diamond detective series. Stevie has to figure out who stole money from the Garbage Busters, the environmental group her mother runs. After several mishaps and hair-raising adventures, she catches the thief - with some help from her 72-year-old woman neighbour. Stevie's adventures continue in three other hilarious titles. (Ages 8-12)
- **SUPER WOMEN IN SCIENCE**, by Kelly Di Domenico
Profiles of 10 women scientists from around the world. This is part of the Women's Hall of Fame Series. Other titles in the series include:
Amazing Women Athletes by Jill Bryant
Fabulous Female Physicians by Sharon Kirsch
(Non-fiction Ages 9-14)
- **THE BEEKEEPER'S APPRENTICE** by Laurie King
A 15-year old orphan girl encounters the returned Sherlock Holmes, right where Sir Arthur Conan Doyle left him, tending to bees in the English countryside. She convinces him to teach her his detective strategies and undergoes an investigation of her own. (Ages 14-18)

All of these books are available from either the Grand Forks Public Library or from the amazing women at Thimble Mountain Books.

For more information on Women's stories, Women's Lives come to the Grand Forks Public Library on Tuesday October 25th at 7pm and attend a "Women's Herstory Month" celebration co-hosted by The Boundary Women's Resource Center, The Grand Forks Public Library and Thimble Mountain Books.

I will have an extended reading list of books about strong and courageous females available that you can share with the strong and courageous girls and boys in your life.

For more information on Family Literacy programs in the Boundary contact Lizanne Eastwood - Family Literacy Coordinator- Columbia Basin Alliance for Literacy @ 442-2533 leastwood@thehub.literacy.bc.ca

