

MYRCA 2011 Nominees

The Manitoba Young Readers Choice Award (M.Y.R.C.A.) aims to promote reading and Canadian literature by giving young people the opportunity to vote for their favourite Canadian book an annual preselected list. The books are nominated based on their quality and reader appeal. To vote for your favourite book go to www.myrca.ca.

This year's winner will be announced in April 2011.



Title: **Bank Job**

By James Heneghan

How long can Nell and her friends rob banks before they get caught?



Title: **Dunces Anonymous**

By Kate Jaimet

There's strength in numbers, even small ones.



Title: **Faery Rebels 01**

By R.j. Anderson

Forget everything you think you know about faeries. . . . Creatures full of magic and whimsy? Not in the Oakenwyld. Deep inside the great Oak lies a dying faery realm, bursting with secrets instead of magic. Long ago the faeries mysteriously lost their magic. Robbed of their powers, they have become selfish and dull-witted. Now their numbers are dwindling and their very survival is at stake.

Only one young faery--Knife--is determined to find out where her people's magic has gone and try to get it back. Unlike her sisters, Knife is fierce and independent. She's not afraid of anything--not the vicious crows, the strict Faery Queen, or the fascinating humans living nearby. But when Knife disobeys the Faery Queen and befriends a human named Paul, her quest becomes more dangerous than she realizes. Can Knife trust Paul to help, or has she brought the faeries even closer to the brink of destruction?

Talented newcomer R. J. Anderson creates an extraordinary new fantasy world and weaves a gripping tale of lost magic, high adventure, and surprising friendship in which the fate of an entire realm rests on the shoulders of one brave faery rebel.



Title: **Faster Than Wind**

By Steve Pitt

It is 1900, and 14-year-old Bertie McCross is a newspaper boy in downtown Toronto. Bertie's family has fallen on hard times and can use every penny he brings home from hawking newspapers on the frigid streets. However, in order to do that Bertie has to keep out of the clutches of the Kelly Gang, a family of slightly older Cabbagetown toughs who are shaking down "newsies."

On Christmas Eve, Bertie is almost cornered by the Kellys but is saved by Tommy Fry and Milwaukee Ed, who introduce Bertie to the thrills of iceboat racing on Lake Ontario. Soon Bertie is swept up in the fast and dangerous sport and meets a whole crew of new friends, including Isobel, a girl from a wealthy family with a mansion on Jarvis Street. The continued pursuit by the Kelly Gang, a plunge into freezing harbour water, and the clash of classes all lead up to a spine-tingling race to end all races.



Title: **The Giant-Slayer**

By Iain Lawrence

A girl's imagination transports polio-afflicted kids into a fantastic world.

The spring of 1955 tests Laurie Valentine's gifts as a storyteller. After her friend Dickie contracts polio and finds himself confined to an iron lung, Laurie visits him in the hospital. There she meets Carolyn and Chip, two other kids trapped inside the breathing machines. Laurie's first impulse is to flee, but Dickie begs her to tell them a story. And so Laurie begins her tale of Colosso, a rampaging giant, and Jimmy, a tiny boy whose destiny is to become a slayer of giants.

As Laurie embellishes her tale with gnomes, unicorns, gryphons, and other fanciful creatures, Dickie comes to believe that he is a character in her story. Little by little Carolyn, Chip, and other kids who come to listen, recognize counterparts as well. Laurie's tale is so powerful that when she's prevented from continuing it, Dickie, Carolyn, and Chip take turns as narrators. Each helps bring the story of Colosso and Jimmy to an end--changing the lives of those in the polio ward in startling ways.



Title: **Home Free**

By Sharon Jennings

Twelve-year-old Lee Mets wants to be a writer, even though her mother tells her that good girls want to be either teachers or nurses. Growing up in the changing days of the 1960s, Lee secretly wishes that she were an orphan like her hero, Anne Shirley. When Cassandra, a real live orphan, moves in across the street, Lee is thrilled. With a name like Cassandra, she has to be interesting! Will they be kindred spirits like Anne and Diana? Or will Kathy, Lee's ex-best friend, come between them? As Lee and Cassandra's friendship grows, Lee comes to realize that being an orphan is not as romantic as she had imagined. A tragedy in Lee's life and the truth about

Cassandra's past brings the two girls closer as they go through a summer that will change both their lives."



Title: **The Hunchback Assignments**

By Arthur Slade

A gripping new series combines Steampunk, spying, and a fantastic Victorian London. The mysterious Mr. Socrates rescues Modo, a child in a traveling freak show. Modo is a hunchback with an amazing ability to transform his appearance, and Mr. Socrates raises him in isolation as an agent for the Permanent Association, a spy agency behind Britannia's efforts to rule the empire. At 14, Modo is left on the streets of London to fend for himself. When he encounters Octavia Milkweed, another Association agent, the two uncover a plot by the Clockword Guild behind the murders of important men. Furthermore, a mad scientist is turning orphan children into automatons to further the goals of the Guild. Modo and Octavia journey deep into the tunnels under London and discover a terrifying plot against the British government. It's up to them to save their country.



Title: **Laughing Wolf**

By Nicholas Maes

It is the year 2213. Fifteen-year-old Felix Taylor is the last person on Earth who can speak and read Latin. In a world where technology has defeated war, crime, poverty, and famine, and time travel exists as a distinct possibility, Felix's language skills and knowledge seem out of place and irrelevant. But are they? A mysterious plague has broken out. Scientists can't stop its advance, and humanity is suddenly poised on the brink of eradication. The only possible cure is Lupus Ridens, or Laughing Wolf, a flower once common in ancient Rome but extinct for more than 2,000 years.

Felix must project back to Roman times circa 71 BC and retrieve the flower. But can he navigate through the dangers and challenges of the world of Spartacus, Pompey, Cicero? And will he find the Laughing Wolf in time to save his how family and everyone else from the Plague of Plagues?



Title: **Not Suitable for Family Viewing**

By Vicki Grant

Robin has everything a girl could want. Thanks to her mother--the internationally beloved talk show host Mimi Schwartz--Robin's got the money, the means and the connections to make even her wildest dreams come true. So why, then, does she choose to sit alone in a dark room watching endless reruns of you, you and Mimi?

Don't ask Robin. She doesn't know--not, at least, until the bizarre discovery of an old high-school ring propels her to ditch New York for a tiny Nova Scotian fishing village. In her quest to solve the mystery behind the ring's origin, Robin finds more than a renewed joie de vivre. She discovers love, the truth of her own background-- and the shocking secret that helped make her mother a star.



Title: **Pop**

By Gordon Korman

A YA novel that explores the fierce competitive nature of high school sports. Marcus is new in town and is hoping to make the championship high school football team, but it seems like a closed club, run by current star Troy. One day, while tossing the ball around in a park, Marcus meets Charlie, a man in his fifties, who can play football like an old pro, which is exactly what he happens to be - a former NFL player and local celebrity. Charlie has boundless energy and coaches Marcus on his fear of being tackled, but as Marcus becomes more involved in this friendship it becomes painfully obvious to him, through the simplicity of Charlie's thoughts and his immature behaviour off the field, that the long-term effects of the violent tackles he may have suffered during his glory days have taken their toll. In this novel for YA readers, Gordon Korman tackles some truths about high school sports, while handling the quirky, yet poignant friendship that develops between Marcus and Charlie with both wit and sensitivity.



Title: **Queen of Disguises**

By Melanie Jackso

With the Olympics coming, Dinah has a new gig, but finds she is being stalked by someone she sent to jail—a former actress known as the "Queen of Disguises."



Title: **Return to Bone Tree Hill**

By Kristin Butcher

Did Jessica murder one of her playmates, a troubled boy named Charlie, when she was twelve years old? Disturbed by a recurring dream and needing to clear her conscience, Jessica returns to Victoria, British Columbia, her hometown and the site of the possible crime. There she catches up with her longtime best friend, Jilly, who confirms that Charlie did in fact go missing the week that Jessica's family relocated to Australia. But a memory-erasing bout of meningitis at the time of the incident means Jessica doesn't recall the questioning police officers, the extensive ground search, or being the last person to see Charlie alive.

Jilly keeps Jessica from tackling the dangerous dilemma alone and summons the police when the two become neck deep in trouble. Will Jessica be able to acquit herself of murder before entering college in Calgary, or will her memory of Charlie's death remain a fear she must learn to live with?

In *Return to Bone Tree Hill*, experienced YA writer Kristin Butcher chronicles a mystery that has the reader piecing together the evidence alongside Jessica and Jilly. From life and love conversations under the Bone Tree and the feverish nightmare that continues to offer nebulous clues, to midnight sleuthing and a few life or death confrontations, even the most reluctant readers will be caught up by the minute-to-minute action of these furtive, accidental detectives.



Title: **Rex Zero, the Great Pretender**

By Tim Wynne-Jones

Just as Rex Zero is looking forward to starting grade seven with his band of close friends, he is blindsided by some unexpected news. His family is moving again - just to the other side of Ottawa, but it might as well be the other side of the moon as far as Rex is concerned. In desperation, he concocts an elaborate strategy to stay in his old school district - a plan that leads him into lying and stealing. How far will Rex go to stay put?



Title: **Taken**

By Norah McClintock

Abducted and left alone in the woods, Stephanie struggles to survive.

I lay on the gritty wooden floor of the filthy shack, frozen with terror. For weeks I had been hearing about the two girls who had disappeared, but I had never in a million years thought...

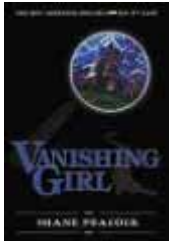


Title: **Timothy and the Dragon's Gate**

By Adrienne Kress

Eleven-year-old Timothy Freshwater has been expelled from every school in his city. With nowhere else to go, he joins his father at the Tall and Imposing Tower of Doom and lands himself an (unpaid) internship with Evans Bore, a hopelessly awkward CEO who hasn't been invited to single fancy party in his entire life. When his father is called away on business, his real education begins. Left in the care of an eccentric neighbour named Mr. Bazalgette, Timothy learns some curious facts about Mr. Bore and his unusually loyal mail

clerk, Mr. Shen--facts that lead to unbelievable revelations: about dragons, servants, and the laws that bind them. With time running out, Timothy takes it upon himself to change one dragon's fate, and begins an adventure that will not end until he is relentlessly pursued by a pack of blood-thirsty black cabs, a crazed ninja and the most feared pirate in the South China Sea! This stand-alone read is the perfect introduction to Adrienne Kress' wild imagination. Those readers who loved her first book, *Alex and the Ironic Gentleman*, will rejoice in the reappearance of Alex, Captain Magnanimous and the peculiar Jack Scratch.



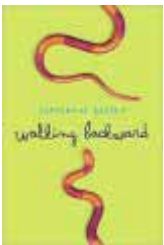
Title: **Vanishing Girl**

By Shane Peacock

The third case in the compelling Boy Sherlock Holmes series is full of as many twists and turns as the backstreets of Victorian London.

When a wealthy young girl vanishes as if by magic in Hyde Park, Sherlock is once again driven to prove himself. In a heart-stopping race against time, an innocent boy's survival depends on Sherlock's ability to solve the mysterious puzzle of the Vanishing Girl. As complex as the maze that protects the missing girl's hiding place, this case takes Sherlock racing to the countryside, the coast, and into the lair of a menagerie of exotic, dangerous creatures.

Haunted by memories of his shattered family, goaded by his enemies, driven to heal the fragile relationship between him and the beautiful Irene Doyle, Sherlock makes an almost fatal mistake. In the end, his brilliant powers of deduction and the steadfast eccentric Sigerson Bell save the day. Soon, very soon, the world will come to know him as the master detective of all time.



Title: **Walking Backward**

By Catherine Austen

After his mother dies in a car crash, twelve-year-old Josh is left with a father who is building a time machine in the basement and a little brother who talks to a toy Power Ranger as if it is his dead mother. With no faith to guide him, Josh makes death his summer research project. He collects facts, interviews suspects, compares religious rituals and feels guilty when he enjoys playing soccer or winning computer games. Isolated by grief in a home where every day is pajama day, Josh waits for life to feel normal, for death to make sense and for his father to start acting like a father.

Title: **Wolf Pack of the Winisk River**

By Paul Brown



Powerful free verse captures the raw beauty of the landscape and wildlife of northern Ontario.

Food is scarce after a harsh winter and in order to stay alive, a large timber wolf must fight off two young male wolves and insert himself into a pack led by a strong alpha female. Together they lead the pack's two-hundred-mile journey along the Winisk River to Hudson Bay and the Severn River, pursuing the Woodland Caribou. As their struggle for survival intensifies, the wolves are threatened by human hunters, near-starvation, treacherous waters, and attacks by competing packs. In this bold literary work, Paul Brown explores the Great North and the heart of its wildlife through the eyes of a determined, courageous timber wolf.