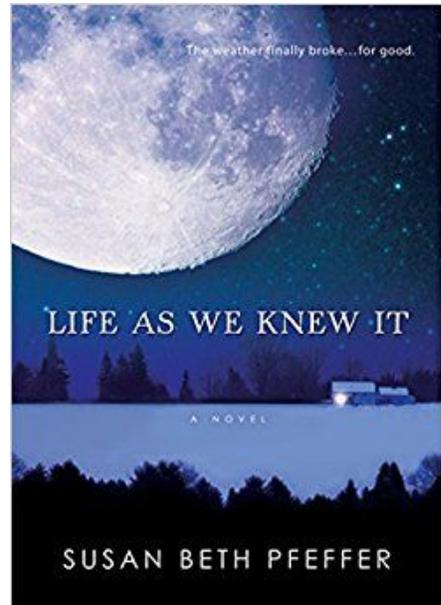


## Evergreen Book Award Winner 2009: *Life As We Knew It* by Susan Beth Pfeffer

### Nominees

- 1 *Just Listen* by Sarah Dessen
- 2 *Eagle Blue: a team, a tribe, and a high school basketball season in Arctic Alaska* by Michael D'Orso
- 3 *Born to Rock* by Gordon Korman
- 4 *Dairy Queen* by Catherine Murdock
- 5 *Life As We Knew It* by Susan Beth Pfeffer
- 6 *Terrier: A Tortall Legend* by Tamora Pierce
- 7 *Doppelganger* by David Stahler
- 8 *Knights of the Hill Country* by Tim Tharp
- 9 *Grist* by Heather Waldorf
- 10 *The Rules of Survival* by Nancy Werlin



### Booktalks

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#### *Just Listen* by Sarah Dessen

Annabel Green gets to play a teen that has everything as a model on a commercial for Kopf's Department Store-top student, popular, cheerleader. What few people realize, including her own family, is that she's just the opposite. Her friends shun her at school, her sister suffers from a serious eating disorder, and she doesn't really find joy in doing her modeling anymore. In fact she feels like she's only doing it to keep her mother happy.

On top of that she's holds a shameful secret that ties her up inside and haunts everything she does. Then, when she feels like she'll always sit alone during lunch, she finds herself connecting to Owen, another recluse. All she knows of Owen is that he's always got earphones in and that he got in trouble for hitting another kid pretty hard.

Now she finds herself drawn to him and discovers an attraction to his odd ways and strange music. But will she ever be able to speak to her other friends again and what will happen to Whitney, her sister who was hospitalized for a serious eating disorder? As Annabel tries to do her part to keep her family together, she runs into all kinds of difficulties and obstacles along the way.

**Rosalie Olds, Teen Librarian, King County Library System**

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## *Just Listen* by Sarah Dessen Booktalk #2

Just listen. That is what we usually say to someone when we want their full attention about something we have to say. Just listen.

But, what if what you have to say is so awful you cannot bring yourself to say it? So awful that you choose to lose all your friends and live in utter isolation rather than say it?

Annabel has made that choice. What happened at that end of the school year party is not what her best friend Sophie claims. Annabel did not go after Sophie's boyfriend Will. Sophie doesn't want to listen to what really happened. Who would believe Annabel if she told them what really happened?

Just listen. Annabel's supposed to be the girl who 'has it all'- the theme of her recent modeling shoot. But, she cannot even listen to the voices in her head that haunt her, demanding resolution.

Until Owen. Owen, school loner, helps Annabel face her resolute inability to tell the truth if it hurts. He helps her to really see what is going on in her family of non-communicators. When Annabel listens to the CD Owen mixes for her titled "Just Listen", she finally hears her own voice and knows what she has to do.

Read this amazing book about friendship, families, and truth – and don't be surprised if you start listening....

**Kathy Caldwell, Teacher-Librarian, Bainbridge Island Middle School**

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## *Eagle Blue: a team, a tribe, and a high school basketball season in Arctic Alaska* by Michael D'Orso

This is the basketball team from Fort Yukon. They live eight miles above the Arctic Circle. There are no roads leading to their village. Some of their families have to deal with poverty, alcoholism, and violence. One of the players says Fort Yukon is like a bucket of crabs: "If one crab gets a claw-hold on the edge... and starts to pull itself out, the others will reach up and grab it and pull it back down." But they've got a coach who won't quit and when these boys get onto the court, all the rest of it just goes away. It's a great story about an underdog team, the unusual life they lead and the great basketball games they play. It's Eagle Blue: a team, a tribe, and a high school basketball season in Arctic Alaska.

**Kirsten Edwards, Teen Librarian, King County Library System**

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*Eagle Blue: a team, a tribe, and a high school basketball season in Arctic Alaska* by Michael D'Orso Booktalk #2

Fort Yukon Alaska was a beaten down place. A town where the native culture had fallen apart to be replaced by shrink-wrapped food, television, snowmobiles, and alcohol—lots of alcohol. Families were in various stages of disintegration, and kids felt they had little or no future. That was Fort Yukon when Dave Bridges took over coaching the high school basketball team, the Fort Yukon Eagles. He turned the team around with his emphasis the on basics: team work, sharing, and a crushing defense that simply wore their opponents down. These were the same traditional values that had made “The People”, the Athabascan natives who lived in Fort Yukon, a once proud nation. For six straight years the team had won the regional basketball finals and gone to the state tournament. Last year they made it to the 1A state finals.

For Fort Yukon's boys, whose lives at home and in the classroom were constantly subject to disruption, the basketball team become the one place in town where they could work hard and be successful.

For senior Matt Shewfelt, whose father and brother had played on older Eagles teams, this was a last chance for family glory, a last chance to play a game he loved before he entered an uncertain adult world. This year Matt will be the Eagles captain--the senior on whose slim shoulders the hopes of “The People” would be carried.

The team was a source of pride for the people of Fort Yukon, and in this community that was very important. In the long dark Fort Yukon winter, the one thing people looked forward to was the basketball season.

Coach Bridges left the first practice that winter of 2004 unable to contain his excitement. Eleven boys had shown up, more than had ever turned out for a first practice. He knew some would not return. But no matter what, he would have a full squad this season, and it would be a very good team. This just might be it, the team he had been waiting for, the team the whole town had dreamed of. This just might be the year the Fort Yukon Eagles go all the way.

**Tom Reynolds, Teen Librarian, Sno-Isle Regional Library System**

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*Eagle Blue: a team, a tribe, and a high school basketball season in Arctic Alaska* by Michael D'Orso Booktalk #3

This true story, set in the snowbound Alaskan village of Fort Yukon reveals how basketball can intensify the spirit of pride. Although tribal heritage has been beaten down by drugs or domestic violence , many generations celebrate success on the court with six consecutive regional championships.

Typical of many isolated Alaskan communities, the main transportation is by plane. These added expenses for all competing teams becomes a community funding effort. Temperatures in negative numbers can cancel a flight and force a loss by default.

Many voices narrate the quest for the ultimate state championship, from the nonnative coach, to family and fans of the team. Descriptions of games played crackle with intense immediacy.

**Lyla Anderson, Teacher-Librarian, Haller Middle School & Post Middle School**

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### *Born to Rock* by Gordon Korman

Leo Caraway has always played fair. He's a squared-away straight-arrow high-achieving president of the High School Republicans Club. But senior year all that is blown away. First, Leo is falsely accused of cheating and loses his full scholarship to Harvard. Then he discovers that his long-lost bio-dad is actually King Maggot, punk-rock star and millionaire.

Could the solution to his college problem be his long-lost father? Would a wild-living, hard-rocking musician step up and pay for Leo's tuition? Leo will have to spend the summer touring with his new-found father to find out.

For just about any other teenager, spending the summer on tour with a famous rock-and-roll band would be a dream come true. For Leo Caraway, it's a nightmare! For the reader it's a riot. Don't miss: *Born to Rock* by Gordon Korman.

**Kirsten Edwards, Teen Librarian, King County Library System**

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### *Dairy Queen* by Catherine Murdock

D.J. Schwenk is proud of her two older brothers' football skills which sent them off to college. She'd rather focus on basketball, herself, but instead must daily work at the family's dairy due to her father's hip injury. Then a family friend, and a rival school's football coach gets her to agreeing to train HIS charming but lazy star quarterback, Brian.

Brian soon discovers that D.J. is not a chatty airhead girl, and she successfully improves Brian's skills. So: Why not join her own school's football team like her brothers did, if she's that good? Well, now now the whole town's talking about D.J. And Brian thinks she's a traitor because she knows too much about him—knowledge that can help D.J.'s school beat his team. When these two football teams finally meet, there's going to be a showdown—and DJ is right in the middle of it all.

**Lyla Anderson, Teacher-Librarian, Haller Middle School & Post Middle School**

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## 2009 Winner - *Life As We Knew It* by Susan Beth Pfeffer

On May 18 an asteroid hit the moon. It wasn't a surprise. We all knew it was going to happen. It had been talked about for weeks. Everyone was excited and at 9:30 that night, all our neighbors were out in their yards to watch it happen. It was like a big block party, and people cheered when it happened—but not for long. There had been some kind of a miscalculation. Even the astronomers were surprised when the impact pushed the moon out of its orbit. They could explain what had happened. I know I can't. But what I can say is that after the collision the moon was tilted wrong, and it was smack in the middle of the sky, and it was way too large.

At first people couldn't believe it, and then everything started to go wrong. The cell phones went out, the Internet stopped working. No CNN, just local television and mostly reports on the radio. And things just kept getting worse. My name is Miranda. I'm sixteen and these are my diary entries about what happened after that asteroid hit the moon. My brother Matt says we are living through a special time in history. A time when we can all be heroes. Mrs. Nesbitt, or next-door neighbor, says people will rise to the occasion. My younger brother Jonny hopes they will cancel school for the rest of the year. Mom is worried we won't have enough food to last until things get better.

What I know for sure is that right after the impact giant waves destroyed much of the coast including big cities like New York, Boston, Miami, and places like Cape Cod and Hawaii. Terrible storms cut the power, and earthquakes hit places that had never had them before. Then volcanoes started to erupt all over the world filling the sky with clouds and cutting out the sun. Now the scientists are warning about drought and record cold temperatures. Even our cat Horton has disappeared. With the numbers of the dead rising, I wonder if things will never be normal again? Or is life as we knew it just a memory?

**Tom Reynolds, Teen Librarian, Sno-Isle Regional Library System**

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## *Terrier: A Tortall Legend* by Tamora Pierce

In the imaginary medieval-ish kingdom of Tortall, 16-year old Beka Cooper has just signed on to become a "Puppy" (a rookie cop) in the Provost's Guard, the peacekeeping officers who are commonly referred to as Dogs. Beka asks for duty in the Lower City, which is a tough beat: gangs, thieves: you name it. It's also where she grew up.

Beka doesn't take any guff from anyone, and she speaks the lingo of the Lower City. She also has another gift; she can hear the restless spirits of the dead who inhabit pigeons.

Now someone is killing workers and children, and Beka aims to find out who.

She has the help of various friends, plus her purple-eyed cat, Pounce, who is more than he seems. Beka is a vengeful Puppy who becomes known as a Terrier among the Dogs for her determination in bringing wrongdoers to justice.

**Cindy Claypool, Teen Librarian, King County Library System**

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*Doppelganger* by David Stahler

Have you heard the legend of the doppelganger? It's a creature who looks just like you. In some stories, if you see one, it means you're going to die. In other stories, it's a shape-changer. You won't know until it's too late that the person you're talking to is really a monster who will kill you and steal your shape—then move into your home with your family and steal your life.

Chris is a tough guy. A jock. A fighter. But when he beats up the wrong homeless guy, his life is over: he took on a doppelganger. Maybe you think Chris got what he deserved. But did the monster? As it takes over Chris' life it discovers that some human beings act like monsters—like parents who abuse their kids.

As the doppelganger Chris begins to sink into Chris' old life, he's tempted by the opportunity to change things, make things different—maybe better. When the human beings are monsters, can the monster become a human being?

**Kirsten Edwards, Teen Librarian, King County Library System**

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*Knights of the Hill Country* by Tim Tharp

Hampton Green, the star linebacker of the small-town Kennisaw Knights, lives and breathes football. He and his best friend, Blaine, lead the team in their quest for a fifth undefeated year. They dream of playing college ball once they win this season. Time stops for Hamp on the field, and he knows how the players will act even before they do, but his personal life does not run as smoothly. In class and with girls, he searches for the right words and comes up empty-handed. He finally meets someone who sees and appreciates him, but Blaine, whose own dreams teeter on the edge, stands between him and happiness. This novel stands as a must-read for any guy who loves the game or who dreams of taking control of his own life.

**Pat Strawn, Librarian, John Jay High School, San Antonio, Texas**

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*Grist* by Heather Waldorf

Charlie just can't face spending summer vacation with her dad and his new girlfriend. So she escapes to her Grandmother's remote Ontario town. Who knew that a town that small and isolated could have so many secrets? Including the terrible one about the boy Charlie has grown to love...

**Kirsten Edwards, Teen Librarian, King County Library System**

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## *The Rules of Survival* by Nancy Werlin

For those of you who liked "A Boy Called It", it's likely you'll like this book.

Matthew was the big brother in a family with a very, scary, unpredictable mother. He never knew if she'd come home loving or vicious. What he did know was that it was up to him to protect his younger sisters. Sometimes the task felt nearly impossible. Although his dad was kind of around, he didn't seem to have the emotional strength to raise the kids himself.

Then one day Matthew runs into an interesting man named Murdoch McIlvane. He sees him stand up to father who is about to abuse his son in the store. It is this observation of Murdoch and later a connection with him that enables Matthew to think about getting away from his mother. Everyday, though, his mother seems crazier and crazier. Even driving with her in the car is not safe.

The question is, will he be able to get he and his sisters out before someone gets seriously hurt? What adult or adults could help him?