



GOPHER TO THE RESCUE!

NEWS AND REVIEWS

Gopher to the Rescue named Outstanding Science Tradebook for Students K-12!

The National Science Teachers Association and Children's Book Council chose Gopher as one of 2013's Outstanding Science Tradebooks for Students K-12. Here's what they said: "Today's best science trade books include captivating stories [and] feature outstanding art, lyric poetry, and plenty of ideas for hands-on activity. These great books have something to grab the minds and hearts of diverse learners. . . They have the potential to enrich and inspire, as they convey the best science content." We are very proud of our award! Check out the story at <http://www.nsta.org/publications/ostb/ostb2013.aspx>

Gopher to the Rescue: 2013 New Books for Missouri Students

School Library Journal April 2012

Full of interesting facts, this picture book introduces youngsters to the eruption on Mount St. Helens. Through the point of view of a gopher that lives on the mountain, readers are told of the effects of the disaster on plants and animals survived the volcanic blast and how others were unable to the habitat of living and nonliving things. The story describes how certain find food or shelter after the explosion. It explains how nature rebuilds and recovers after years of devastation. Realistic drawings depict wildlife in all stages of survival. Full-page spreads and earthy hues will capture children's attention and show the interconnectedness of nature. Back matter

includes educational supplements and activities on natural disasters, habitat changes, pressure and melting, and tectonic plates. –Melissa Smith, Royal Oak Public Library, MI

Library Media Connection- August 2012

Meet a real lifesaver-gopher. A volcano erupts in the forest, killing many of the animals and all of the plants. Gopher is one of the few animals to survive. He helps with his tunnels by providing shelter to animals and nutrients to the soil. Eventually, the mountain is again teeming with life. This book would enhance the science curriculum: it touches on plants and animals in the U.S., habitats, and volcanoes. The back of the book contains educational activities such as an experiment and quiz. There are free online resources at the publisher's website that coordinate directly with the book, and are available in Spanish and English. The illustrations are detailed and realistic; the text is large and bold so a young reader can easily read it. Children will like this title for the story, and teachers will find the factual aspects valuable to instruction. Patricia Walsh, Educational Reviewer, Norfolk, Virginia

Highly Recommended

The Reston Connection, April 4, 2012

Heroes of Mount St. Helens
Reston resident writes about role of gophers.

By Amiee Freeman

Among the smallest of the animals that live on Mount St. Helens, the northern pocket gopher has been credited with aiding in the restoration of Mount St. Helens. "Gopher to the Rescue," a newly released book written by Reston resident Terry Jennings, examines the role of gophers in eco-system recovery following a volcanic eruption.

"Gophers are not a very good subject to hook a story to, but the more I looked into their role at Mount St. Helens, the more I realized that gophers could be a hero," said Jennings.

Mount St. Helens, located in the Cascade Mountain range in Washington State and 50 miles northeast of Portland, is famous for its catastrophic eruption on May 18, 1980.

FOLLOWING THE ERUPTION, thousands of feet of ash, pumice and stone rained down on all the sides of the volcano, dramatically altering the landscape surrounding the mountain. Nearly 150 square miles of forest was blown over or left dead. A vast, gray landscape replaced the once-forested slopes of Mount St. Helens. Fifty-seven people died in the eruption and its aftermath, an estimated 7,000 big game animals (deer, bears and elk) perished, and 250 homes and miles of roads, bridges, and railways were destroyed.

Jennings had visited Mount St. Helens in 1981, just months after the eruption. "The devastation was very difficult to understand," said Jennings. When she was asked by her publisher, Sylvan Dell Publishing, to write a book about how animals react to a volcanic eruption, Mount St. Helens came to mind due to the immense amount of information that has been produced following the eruption. "Mount St. Helens was easy to personalize because there is so much data about it. After the eruption, the mountain was largely closed off and became like a laboratory," said Jennings.

THIS IS THE FIRST BOOK Jennings has had published that bears her name. She has written many educational texts for children for a Smithsonian series. Prior to that, she wrote a column for The Connection. I started writing because I like to write. The Smithsonian position was a great gig and I got to do research about interesting topics. I also was able to talk to some really passionate scientists. To me, it was very interesting that these scientists were so passionate about their work. I wanted to share that passion, that engagement."

In addition to writing books, Jennings is assisting KC (short for Kool Cat), the first feline blogger, write a blog of interesting science facts. The blog has only been up for one month. The goal of the blog is to encourage children to do research and to be inquisitive. "I hope the website will be of help. I didn't want to do a website with just my books listed. I hope the website can be of value to kids," said Jennings.

Jenning's blog – rather, KC's blog can be found at www.kcswildfacts.com.

Jennings will be at the Reston Barnes and Noble on April 14 to discuss "Gopher to the Rescue."

Heck of a Bunch Blog

Tuesday, April 10, 2012

Gopher to the Rescue! - Children's Book Review
My Review:

A book that depicts animal life after a volcanic eruption, *Gopher to the Rescue!* tells how animals survived and how some were killed. The book shows illustrations of several animal species. I enjoyed the story but was off put by one of the pages that depicted dead animals laying on the ground. The Creative Minds section in the back of the book is informative and tells of volcanoes, natural disasters and habit changes, and a science experiment on pressure and melting.

Gopher to the Rescue! is a Spring 2012 release from Sylvan Dell Publishing.

THE READING TUB
Wednesday, May 9, 2012

Gopher to the Rescue!: A Volcano Recovery Story by Terry Catusus Jennings
Terry Catusus Jennings explores the cycle of a volcanic eruption in her children's book, *Gopher to the Rescue!: A Volcano Recovery Story*. Looking at this natural disaster from a gopher's point of view, the reader discovers the devastation a volcano can cause as well as how the smallest of animals bring life and recovery back to the land.

Many years ago, I walked the mountain and discovered first-hand the destruction of the eruption of Mount St. Helens in Washington State. I saw the beginnings of life returning, but I never had the understanding of where or how the healing of the land began. *Gopher to the Rescue!* has helped me to better understand the rebuilding process and has provided this adult mind a new perspective. I have yet to share this treasure with my own children

Review: *Gopher to the Rescue!* learning table reviews, April 17, 2012

Gopher to the Rescue by Terry Catusus Jennings is a Sylvan Dell title which incorporates science, history, math, and language arts through its story and accompanying educational activities. Can a picture book do all of this? If it's from Sylvan Dell, it sure can. Once again, Sylvan Dell has done an exceptional job of crossing the curriculum with an interesting and engaging format to grab kids' attention and create enthusiasm for learning.

Laurie O'Keefe's detailed illustrations bring Terry Jennings' story to life as the animals on the mountain scurry to find safety when the volcano erupts. The story tackles the harsh reality of what happens in the immediate aftermath, but goes on to show how the area recovers and life returns over the years. Some animals are able

to find shelter, while others do not survive. Though this may be disturbing for some readers, the realities are depicted in a straightforward way, with the focus on the little gopher who is able to hide under ground until it is safe to come out.

This book is based on the true-life eruption of Mount St. Helens in 1980 and the scientific research that has been conducted there since. Kids will be fascinated to see how the area has changed. The "For Creative Minds" section of the book includes information on what volcanoes are and where they are located on the earth, natural disasters' effects on habitats, and a hands-on activity to experiment with pressure and melting.

To further extend the study, Sylvan Dell offers a slew of online resources to accompany this as well as all of their other books. The Gopher to the Rescue activities include 41 pages of cross-curricular activities and lesson plans (which are free,) quizzes, alignment to standards, and tons of related links. The great thing about this book is that you can choose to do as much or as little along with it as you'd like, and you can incorporate it into your classroom or simply read it (or have your kids read it) as a story book. Especially for boys or kinesthetic learners who like non-fiction, or for anyone who loves animals and nature, this book is sure to be a hit.

Launching pad for educational discussions.

March 21, 2012

By

Wayne S. Walker "Home School Book Review" (Salem, IL)

This review is from: Gopher to the Rescue! A Volcano Recovery Story (Hardcover) When a volcano erupts, is it possible for the surrounding countryside which has been devastated to recover, and if so, how can it occur? All the animals in the wilderness, such as the snowshoe hare, the black bear, the gopher, the elk, the squirrel, sense that something is different on the nearby mountain. The ground shakes. Steam and ash burst from the mountain's top. Then the volcano erupts. Many of the animals are killed, but gopher is safe in his burrow with plenty of tasty roots and bulbs to eat. Over the next few days, weeks, months, and years, what happens to bring both plant and animal life back to the mountain area? And what part does gopher play in it all?

This fictionalized story, with text by science author Terry Catasus Jennings and art by scientific illustrator Laurie O'Keefe, is based on the surprising observations made by scientists who have spent years studying the return of life to the mountain following the eruption of Mt. St. Helens on May 18, 1980. The "For Creative Minds" section has further information on volcanoes and tectonic plates, a quiz concerning how natural disasters bring habitat changes, and a hands-on activity about pressure and melting. In addition, sixty to seventy pages of cross-curricular teaching activities and three interactive reading comprehension and math quizzes on Gopher to the Rescue can be found at the publisher's website to help parents and educators

extend the learning possibilities. It is a picture book that is both fun to read and great as a launching pad for educational discussion.

GOPHER TO THE RESCUE! A VOLCANO RECOVERY STORY

Author: Terry Catusus Jennings

Illustrator: Laurie O'Keefe

Summary: Did you know that gophers play a role in helping a mountain after a volcano? This is the story of a gopher who helped restore the mountain and countryside after Mount St. Helens erupted in 1980. It shows how nature eventually flourished again because of the interdependence of various animals and plants. This is a picture book filled with science and nature information.

Type of Reading: family reading, anytime reading, independent reading, read aloud book

Recommended Age: read together: 5 to 9; read yourself: 9 to 12

Interest Level: 5 to 10

Reading Level: 3.7

Age of Child: Read with a group of second-grade students.

Little Kid Reaction: My friend used this with her class and the book was well received.

Big Kid Reaction: Gopher to the Rescue is nicely done with lots of good information. This would be an excellent way of getting a class interested in a science project or unit on nature.

Pros: There is lots to share for different audiences. Although this is a fictional character, the science content is accurate and detailed.

Cons: None.

Borrow or Buy: Buy! This is a great book to share for learning or just enjoyment.

If You Liked This Book, Try: TIME For Kids: VOLCANOES! (Science Scoops, Confident Reader) ADVENTURES OF RILEY: SURVIVAL OF THE SALMON (Riley's World Series®) SURPRISING SHARKS

Educational Themes: There is a lot of depth to this book - and activities in the back, too. You can discover / study: volcanoes, animals, natural disasters and their aftermath, as well as habitat restoration.

Notes: Bob Walch, Monterey, California, sent us this review. Bob's reviews appear in the Salinas Californian, Watsonville Register-Pajaronian, Aptos Times, Ride/Western Times and Coast Views Magazine. His online reviews can be found at

MyShelf, Roundtable Reviews, Parent Click, Midwest Book Review, and I Love a Mystery.

Literary Categories: Fiction - picture book, animal stories, nature, science, geology

Date(s) Reviewed: May 2012

The Spectrum, St. George, Utah, December 1, 2012

"Gopher to the Rescue! A Volcano Recovery Story"

By Terry Catusus Jennings; Sylvan Dell Publishing; 32 pages.

The forest animals in "Gopher to the Rescue" are surprised when a volcano suddenly explodes, covering the land in gritty, warm ash and rocks that make it unlivable for many plants and animals. However, Gopher survives in his underground burrow with food to eat. Readers will discover how Gopher helps to bring life back to the Earth.

Jennings has been heavily involved in the environmental arts for the past 20 years. Her articles have appeared in The Washington Post and Ranger Rick children's nature magazine. Families and children whose lives have been affected by Hurricane Sandy will be inspired by this fictionalized story based on the surprising and profound observations of how life returns to an area that has been totally changed or destroyed.

Reston Patch, May 9, 2012 by Maria Bonaquist.

When you're asked to write a book about volcanoes, it helps to be from Reston – home of the U.S. Geological Survey. So Terry Jennings took full advantage of her location when preparing to write a children's book.

"I went to USGS and checked out everything they had on volcanoes," says Jennings, an author who specializes in educational material for children. "They had a lot on Mount St. Helens."

Even better. The editor she was working with was interested in a picture book on how animals reacted to the May, 1980 eruption of Mount St. Helens, so she used the information from USGS and followed up with a Mount St. Helens scientist.

The result: *Gopher to the Rescue*, an educational picture book just published by Sylvan Dell.

The story Jennings wrote and is sharing with school children she visits focuses on the gopher as a survivor. Animals who lived above the earth saw their homes destroyed, but when the volcano erupted, Jennings' furry little hero could tunnel underground. While he's there, he burrows through the earth, mixing volcano ash with the soil. Although he doesn't realize it, he's also sowing seeds that had been in the ash. Slowly, the seeds sprout, and the earth around Mount St. Helens returns to life.

"They provided little islands [of growth] where life spread out," Jennings says. "The book pretty much wrote itself when I found our hero, the gopher. It was a very fun book to write."