

Mail Call! A Postal History Booklist for Young Readers

National Postal Museum Library
Smithsonian Institution Libraries
2005

Full list

Preschool

- Baggette, Susan and William Moriarty. *Jonathan Goes to the Post Office*. Sterling, VA: Brookfield Reader, Inc., The. Board Books, 1998.

About the book:

Today's Librarian Jonathan's just a regular kid doing regular daily activities, making him the perfect role model for the younger set, who are endeared by easily identifiable subject matter the back cover poses a search-and-find game in which youngsters must match colors, shapes and pictures. It's a nice touch that expands the readership of this book - from infants to preschoolers.

- Farrell, Sue and Robin Baird Lewis. *To the Post Office with Mama*. Toronto: Annick Press, Limited, 1994.

About the book:

Ingram The text, told with simple and poetic language, exudes a sense of warmth and comfort. Two-year-old Shea tells about getting dressed up in her winter clothing and going to the post office with her mother to mail a letter to Nanny. Full color.

- Golden Books Staff. *Seven Little Postmen*. Westminster, MD: Random House Children's Books, 2002.

About the book:

This lively poem by the author of *Goodnight Moon* tells the tale of one little boy's letter. What happens after the boy drops it into the mailbox? How does it get to his grandma's house? Children will enjoy this rollicking tale of the seven little postmen who got the mail through.

- Ladybird Books Staff. *Busy Little Postman*. Toronto: Penguin Books Canada, Ltd., 1997.

- Poydar, Nancy. *Mailbox Magic*. New York: Holiday House, 2000.

About the book:

School Library Journal Will, who poses as a magician in flowing cape, thinks the whole concept of mail is magical, and he wishes desperately that something would come addressed to him. Finally he sends away for a personalized cereal bowl by filling out labels from Magic Charms cereal boxes. After weeks of waiting, the child is elated when his package finally arrives. Then he is off to find a cereal company that sends horses. A short sketch of how to send a letter may inspire young children to try their own "mailbox magic." Buoyant, colorful illustrations carry out the exuberance of the story.

- Reasoner, Charles. *Who's got mail?* New York: Price Stern Sloan, 2000.

About the book:

Die-cut in the shape of a mailbox, *Who's Got Mail?* starts off with a hinged flap right on its front cover that kids can pull down to peer inside. From there we follow the path of a letter into the mailman's bag, off to the post office for sorting, and then into a truck for delivery to your house. All along the way there are hinged two-way doors, flaps to lift up, pop-ups to enjoy, and, at the very end, a pasted down letter to open up with a special surprise for the reader. Even the smallest of kids are fascinated by the concept of mail, and here's the perfect interactive book to show them the route a letter takes on its way to their door. From bestselling author and illustrator Charles Reasoner, *Who's Got Mail?* will give kids a fun, hands-on way of moving the mail along.

- Wawrychuk, Carol et al. *The Post Office: Active Learning about Community Workers*. Palo Alto, CA: Monday Morning Books, Inc., 1998.
- Wilson-Max, Ken. *Max's Letter*. Boston: Hyperion Press, 1999.

5 - 9 Years

- Ahlberg, Janet. *Jolly Christmas Postman*. Boston: Little, Brown and Co., c1991.

About the book:

Ingram

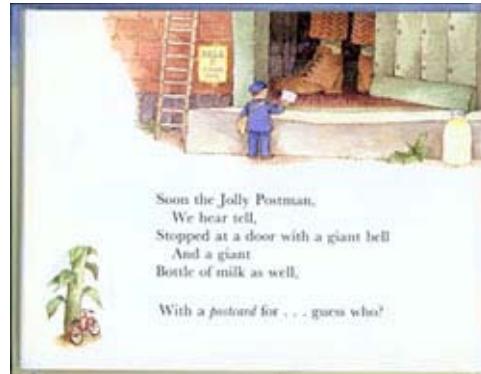
The Jolly Postman returns with a pouch overflowing with holiday cheer--letters from the Big Bad Wolf, a miniature book, a terrible board game, even a Humpty Dumpty jigsaw puzzle, and more, all tucked into envelopes bound right into the book. "Pure delight."--Kirkus Reviews, pointer review. Full-color illustrations.

- Ahlberg, Allan and Janet. *The Jolly Postman*. New York: Little Brown Children's Books, 2001.

About the book:

Ingram

As the Jolly Postman goes from house to house in this magical kingdom delivering the mail, children can read, on every other page, the whimsical letters tucked inside their own envelopes. "Delightful, full of clever detail, and frequently hilarious. . . . A real treat."--Publishers Weekly. Full-color illustrations.



- Ahlberg, Janet and Allan. *The Jolly Postman and Other Peoples Letters*. New York: Viking Penguin, 1999.

About the book:

Fifteen years ago, long before anyone else thought of tucking actual letters and notes inside a book, Little, Brown published *The Jolly Postman* by Allan and Janet Ahlberg. This wonderful book gave children a chance to read letters sent from one fairy tale or Mother Goose character to another. Among the funny notes was one from Jack, who lolled on a sun-renched island, thanking the Giant for the gold that let him afford such a nifty vacation. All this amusing correspondence was deftly illustrated and the book attracted hordes of eager readers.

Ahlberg, Janet and Allan. *The Jolly Pocket Postman*. London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1995.

- Baler, Darice and Tom Antonishak. *Wanted - a Few Bold Riders: a Story of the Pony Express*. Norwalk, CT: Soundprints, c1997.

About the book:

Ingram

While visiting the Pony express exhibit at the National Postal Museum, Kevin travels back in time and becomes Warren Upson, a famous rider with a difficult route.

- Bensen, Joe and John Potter. *Pony Bob's Daring Ride: a Pony Express Adventure*. Helena, MT: Falcon, c1995.

About the book:

This is the story of Pony Bob, the brave young man who made the longest and most daring ride in the history of the Pony Express. He covered more than 300 hot and dusty miles across Nevada, in just 2 days. Travel with Pony Bob and discover just what made his ride so treacherous, and learn the fate of those he left behind.

- Bergel, Colin and Mark Koenig. *Mail by the Pail*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, c2000.

About the book:

This is a delightful story that illustrates the mail delivery system for Great Lakes freighters. The J. W. Westcott Company operates the mailboat for the U.S. Postal Service marine post office in Detroit —the only mailboat that delivers mail to freighters while they are moving.

The colorful pictures and expressive words in "Mail by the Pail" will interest young readers as well as anyone living in the states that border the Great Lakes.

- Brill, Marlene Targ and Craig Orback. *Bronco Charlie and the Pony Express*. Minneapolis: Carolrhoda Books, Inc., 2004.

About the book:

Relates how, in 1861, a boy named Charlie Miller became the youngest rider for the Pony Express, a mail service that linked the east and west coasts of the United States.

- Flanagan, Alice and Christine Osinski. *Here comes Mr. Eventoff with the Mail!* New York: Children's Press, c1998.

About the book:

Follows a letter carrier for a day at his job from the time he arrives at the post office to pick up and sort the mail until the last item is delivered.

- Flanagan, Alice. *Letter Carriers*. Minneapolis: Compass Point Books, 2000.
- Ford, Carolyn and Sally Schaedler. *Nothing in the Mailbox*. Katonah: Richard C. Owen Publishers, Inc., 1996.

About the book:

Never receiving anything for himself in the mailbox, a child decides to write letters to almost everyone he knows, with happy results.

- Gibbons, Gail. *Post Office Book: Mail and How it Moves*. New York: T.Y. Crowell Jr., c1982.

About the book:

Publishers Weekly

Gibbons takes readers step-by-step through the mailing process, from the moment the letter is dropped into a mailbox until it reaches its final destination. She includes a glossary and a brief history of message-sending.

- Greene, Carol. *At the Post Office*. Chanhassen, MN: Child's World, Incorporated, The Library Binding, 1998.

About the book:

Takes the readers on a field trip to a post office where they walk through a typical day learning about its functions.

- Greene, Carol. *Postal Workers Deliver our Mail*. Chanhassen, MN: Child's World, c1998.

About the book:

Describes the jobs done by the many workers who contribute to the delivery of our mail.

- Johnson, Jean. *Postal Workers: A to Z*. New York: Walker & Company, 1987.

About the book:*School Library Journal*

Kindergarten-Grade 3 Using an alphabet format, a simple vocabulary, a few lines of text per page, and large black-and-white photographs, Johnson describes the complex process involved in delivering the mail. Beginning readers will enjoy the behind-the-scenes look at equipment and procedures necessary for the collection, sorting, transport, and delivery of the mail on a year-round basis. A more detailed text at the end gives added information. A book that is appropriate for updating the community helpers' section.

- Kule, Elaine. *U.S. Mail*. Berkeley Heights, NJ: Enslow Publishers, c2002.

- Langen, Annette et al. *Letters from Felix: a Little Rabbit on a World Tour*. Hauppauge, NY: Parklance Pub., 2003.

About the book:*Publishers Weekly*

In one of the inaugural titles from the Abbeville Kids imprint, Sophie's family is returning from vacation when her stuffed rabbit, Felix, disappears in a crowded airport. Readers will spot the lost toy on the luggage conveyor depicted in the first of Droop's cheery, busy spreads. As the distressed child goes home, Felix embarks on a whirlwind international tour, communicating with Sophie via five letters (which can be removed from envelopes attached to the pages). After each epistle describes the rabbit's sightseeing adventures in London, Paris, Rome, Cairo, Kenya and New York City, Langen fleshes out Felix's travelogue with additional information about the locales. Though its format obviously recalls the Jolly Postman books, Langen's wordy, occasionally awkward narrative lacks the ingenuity of those works. There are, however, several fetching extras: also tucked into the envelopes are a color snapshot of Felix in front of the Eiffel Tower and a "secret pyramid map" from Egypt; and when he finally arrives home on Christmas Eve-Felix carries a suitcase containing six travel decals. All ages.

- Levinson, Nancy Smiler and Joan Sandin. *Snowshoe Thompson*. New York: HarperCollins, c1992.

About the book:*School Library Journal*

Kindergarten-Grade 3-- This fictionalized account of John Thompson's first winter trek across the Sierra Nevada in the mid-19th century will captivate

many beginning readers. When mail delivery is halted because of heavy snows, Norwegian-born Thompson (one of American's skiing pioneers) volunteers to deliver a young California boy's letter to his father in Carson City, Nevada. The boy, Danny, helps him make a pair of skis--splitting and sanding the wood planks, boiling the wood, and shaping the tips.

- McCormick, Anita Louise. *Pony Express in American History*. Berkeley Heights, NJ: Enslow Publishers, c2001
- Miller, Raymond. *U.S. Stamps: Collect all 50 States*. Tangerine Press, 2003.
- Ready, Dee. *Carteros y Carteras*. Decatur, IL: Capstone Press, Inc., 1998.
- Ready, Dee. *Mail Carriers*. New York: Holiday House, 2000.

About the book:*Ingram*

Explains the clothing, tools, schooling, and work of mail carriers.

- Schaefer, Lola. *We Need Mail Carriers*. Mankato, MN: Pebble Books, c2000.
- Shepard, Daniel. *Where Does the Mail Go?* Mankato, MN: Yellow Umbrella Books, c2003.

About the book:*Ingram*

Provides a clear explanation of how a letter travels from the mailbox to its final destination and examines modern post office machines, jobs of mail handlers, and special postal services.

- Siracusa, Catherine. *No Mail for Mitchell*. New York: Random House, c1990.

About the book:*Publishers Weekly*

This Step into Reading book stars Mitchell the dog, a friendly, dependable mailman. The simple yet witty pictures show him delivering a lavender hatbox to the stylish Mrs. Groundhog; a copy of Mouse and Garden magazine to Mrs. Mouse; and a box of books (return address: Random House) to the erudite Beaver family. But the hardworking Mitchell returns home to find his own mailbox empty. He decides to write a letter to himself, but when he goes out into the rainy night to mail it, the envelope blows away in the wind. When Mitchell braves the elements to deliver a special birthday package, he comes down with a bad cold. Mr. Pig takes over, and the bulging sack he brings to Mitchell's door makes the ailing mailman very happy. With its controlled vocabulary, large type and bright illustrations, Siracusa's cheerful tale is a welcome addition to this excellent series for beginning readers.

- Stewart, Alex. *Sending a Letter*. Danbury, CT: Scholastic Library Publishing, 2000.

About the book:

Booklist

Sending a Letter is a historical view of communication, from messengers and smoke signals to e-mail and faxes.

- Tunnell, Michael and Ted Rand. *Mailing May*. New York: Greenwillow Books, c1997.

About the book:*School Library Journal*

Five-year-old Charlotte May Pierstorff begs to visit her grandmother, but her parents cannot afford to send her. In Idaho in 1914, the train is the only way to make the 75-mile trip over the mountains. The Pierstorffs come up with an unusual solution - mailing May. Sending her as a package is a third of the cost, and since her mother's cousin Leonard handles the railroad mail car, she does not have to travel alone. Children will delight in the fantasy aspects of the tale even after they discover that the story is true. Tunnell describes his research in an author's note. Rand's watercolor illustrations are masterful, as is the design of the book as a whole.

Image: "Owney" National Postal Museum Library, Smithsonian Institution Libraries.

- Wales, Dirk and Diane Kenna. *Lucky dog: Owney: U.S. Rail Mail Mascot*. Chicago, IL: Great Plains Press, c2003.

About the book:*Booklist*

Wales' account of the U.S. Postal Service's first, and probably only, canine mascot will strike a chord with animal lovers and inspire inquiries into history and geography. In 1887, on a cold, rainy night in Albany, New York, a postal worker takes pity on a shivering dog that has taken shelter in the depot. Although it's against the rules, the supervisor allows "Owney" to stay. One day, the dog jumps aboard a mail train and discovers he likes riding the rails. News of his adventures, which ultimately include a trip around the world, spreads as he travels, and people give him baggage tags from the places he visits. The overuse of exclamation points aside, the narrative is clear and straightforward, and the scratchy, earth-toned illustrations aptly convey both the scragginess of the stray and the nineteenth-century backdrop of the story. A satisfying tale, all the more pleasing for being true.

- Watts, Bernadette. *Harvey Hare, Postman Extraordinaire*. New York: North-South Books, Inc., 1999.

About the book:*School Library Journal*

A gentle story of friendship and hard work rewarded. Harvey Hare is truly dedicated. "No matter what the season, no matter what the weather, Harvey made sure the mail was delivered." Readers see him drooping in the heat at high noon on a summer day, soaked by autumn rains, and hopping through snowdrifts to make his deliveries. Finally, the animals decide to give him a present in thanks for his service. They agree upon an umbrella made of spring

grass, leaves, twigs, and flowers to protect him from the elements year-round. The softly colored illustrations reflect the shades of the changing seasons and adeptly portray the animals' natural world. Children will find Harvey's ears particularly expressive, and will certainly agree that this hare is a postman extraordinaire. An appealing look at the value of doing one's work well.
Image: Savage, Jeff. *Pony Express Riders of the Wild West*. Berkeley Heights, NJ: Enslow Publishers, Inc., 1995.

10 - 12 Years

- Boy Scouts of America Staff. *Stamp Collecting*. Charlotte, NC: Boy Scouts of America, 1993.
- Granger, Neill. *Stamp Collecting*. Brookfield, CT: Millbrook Press, Inc., 1994.

About the book:

Ingram

An introductory guide explains why stamps were created, notes their value, and offers advice on setting up, building, and displaying a collection, while relating some of the interesting facts and figures of stamp history.

- H E Harris and Co. Staff. *How to Collect Stamps*. Old Greenwich, CT: Whitman Publishing LLC., 1993.

About the book:

An introduction to stamps and stamp collecting, with guides to identifying American and foreign stamps, a glossary of terms, and maps.

- Isaacs, Sally Senzell. *Stagecoaches and the Pony Express*. Chicago, IL: Heinemann Library, 2004.

- Jonath, Leslie. *Stamp It!: The Ultimate Stamp Collecting Activity Book*. San Francisco: Chronicle Books LLC., 2002.

About the book:

Collect stamps from far-away countries and stamps about famous people, places, and things. Stamp It! Is filled with tons of information, tips, activities, and the tools kids need to get their collections started. Includes • 48 fun stamp activities • Famous stamp facts • Stamp collecting tips • 200 hinges for attaching stamps to the activity pages • Two stock pages for storing special stamps • Plastic zippered pocket.

- Lucas, Eileen. *Our Postal System*. Brookfield, CN: Millbrook Press, c1999.

About the book:

Explores the history of the United States Postal Service, discussing the processing of mail, postal employees, stamps, and letter writing.

- O'Reilly, Susan MacLeod et al. *Collecting Passions: Discovering the Fun of Stamps and Other Stuff from All over the Place*. Toronto: Key Porter Books, 2000.

About the book:

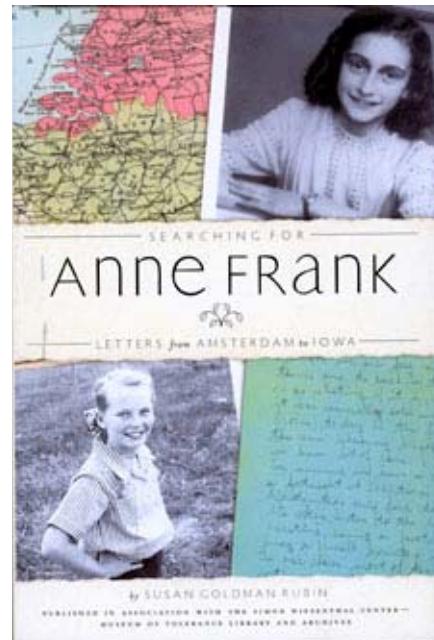
The ultimate beginner's guide to the wonderful world of collecting stamps and other fabulously fun stuff from around the world. All kids collect something, this is a book with helpful hints from experts.

- *United States Stamp Collecting*. Apopka, FL: Pace Products, Inc., 2001.
- Supon Design Group Staff. *Folk Heroes: A Collection of U. S. Postage Stamps*. Washington, DC: Design Editions. Trade Cloth, 1996.
- Varner, Greg. *Prehistoric Animals: A Collection of U.S. Postage Stamps*. Washington, DC: Design Editions, 1996.
- Williams, Jean Kinney. *Pony Express*. Minneapolis, MN: Compass Point Books, c2003.
- Winthrop, Elizabeth. Dear Mr. President – Franklin Delano Roosevelt: Letters from a Mill Town Girl. New York: Winslow Press, 2001.

About the book:

School Library Journal

Emma Bartoletti, the 12-year-old daughter of Italian immigrants, lives in North Adams, MA. She has badgered her Aunt Dora with so many questions about the Depression that her aunt tells her to write to President Franklin D. Roosevelt and ask him why things are so hard for everyone. So begins a fictional three-year (1933-1936) correspondence between Emma and the president. Through their letters, readers come to understand the effects of the Great Depression on the average family and of the programs the federal government put into place to try to bring the country into a better economic situation. The correspondence provides an easily understood explanation of the times.



Goldman Rubin, Susan. *Searching for Anne Frank; Letters from Amsterdam to Iowa*. New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 2003.

Young Adult

- Allen, Judy. *Guide to Stamps and Stamp Collecting*. Twickenham, UK: Tiger Books International; Tulsa, OK: Published in the USA by EDC Pub., c1998.

- Bowyer, Mathew. *They Carried the Mail: a Survey of Postal History and Hobbies.* Washington, R.B. Luce [1972]

About the book:*Publishers Weekly*

"All you want to know about mail except why stamps won't stick."

Book Description

The postal system, from its beginnings in the 17th century, has been a matter of both aggravation and dependability to every man and woman in America. In *They Carried the Mail*, Mathew J. Bowyer presents the fascinating history of these bearers of ill and joyous tidings.

- Graham, Richard. *United States Postal History Sampler.* Sidney, OH: Linn's Stamp News, c1992.

About the book:

The book is an introduction to many different U.S. postal history topics. It consists of 15 chapters based on approximately 60 Linn's columns created by Graham between 1982 and 1991. Corrections and updates published in subsequent Linn's columns have been incorporated into the text where appropriate. Some of the topics covered include train wreck covers, fancy cancels APO markings, campaign covers, flag cancels, Intelex markings, Dead Letter Office markings, early railroad markings, factured first-day covers, free franks, advertising covers and Navy ship post office markings.

- Harness, Cheryl. *They're Off! The Story of the Pony Express.* Aladdin Library, 2002.

About the book:*Ingram*

Provides a factual, exciting account of the American postal system in the 1860s, covering the origins and history of the Pony Express, its daring riders and their struggles, and the tale of the first East to West connection ever made.

- Savage, Jeff. *Pony Express Riders of the Wild West.* New York: Aladdin Paperbacks, 2002.

About the book:*School Library Journal*

An interesting, if not exhaustive, look at the people who settled the West. With personal accounts and colorful portraits of some of the better known (and rowdier) individuals, Savage creates a cursory overview of the time. He gives the perspective of Native Americans as well as the prospectors and miners. Pony Express tells the story behind the expression, "The mail must go

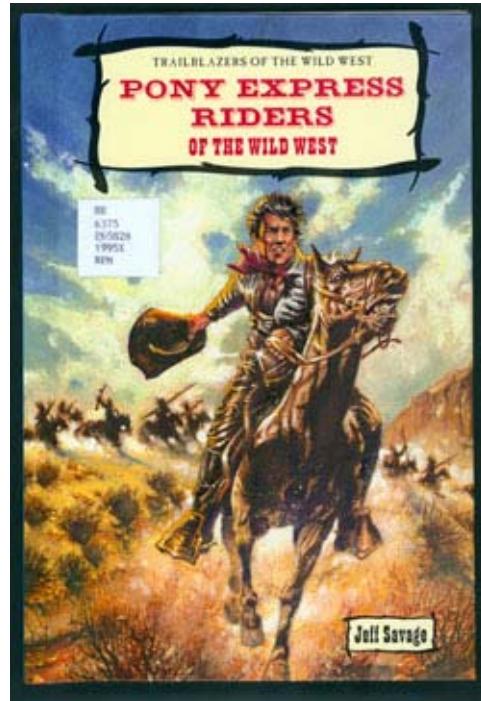
through!" The riders, thieves, bandits and settlers are portrayed in vivid narrative and accounts. The author describes the origins of the Pony Express and its role in spreading the news of the first cannon shots at Fort Sumter, as well as its demise with the advent of the telegraph. Neither title presents new information, but each provides an interesting glance at the period. Black-and-white photos and reproductions appear throughout.

- United States Postal Service. *Postal Service Guide to U.S. Stamps*. New York: HarperCollins, c2000.

About the book:

Newly revised and updated, *The Postal Service Guide to U.S. Stamps* is just the delivery you've been waiting for!

The only fully illustrated, four-color guide to U.S. stamps, this official publication provides the most comprehensive information available about the U.S. stamp program and its vivid history. Beginning with the first stamps released in 1847, *The Postal Service Guide to U.S. Stamps* covers nearly 4,000 stamps issued up to the present.



Savage, Jeff. *Pony Express Riders of the Wild West*. Berkeley Heights, NJ: Enslow Publishers, Inc., 1995.

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