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FULL-COURT QUEST WINS 2008 MONTANA BOOK AWARD

The 2008 Montana Book Award winner is *Full-Court Quest* by Linda Peavey and Ursula Smith, published by University of Oklahoma Press. This annual award recognizes literary and/or artistic excellence in a book written or illustrated by someone who lives in Montana, set in Montana, or dealing with Montana themes or issues. Presentations and a reception with the winning authors will take place Thursday, April 23, during the Montana Library Association Conference in Kalispell.

Full-Court Quest tells the story of the girls from Fort Shaw Indian School basketball team who became the world champions at the 1904 St Louis World's Fair. The book gives a rare glimpse into American Indian life and into the world of women's basketball before "girl's rules" temporarily shackled the sport. In-depth research and extensive collaboration with the teammates' descendants, make this an important Montana story as well as an entertaining narrative.

Four honor books were also chosen by the 2008 Montana Book Award Committee:

Freeman Walker by David Cates, published by Unbridled Books. At the age of seven a mulatto slave boy, Jimmy Gates, is freed by his owner-father, separated from his mother, and sent to England for an education. This adventure tale comes back to America during the Civil War and into the gold camps of Montana, as one man searches for the meaning of moral freedom.

Montana: Stories of the Land edited by Krys Holmes, published by The Montana Historical Society. This book is a well written, comprehensive history of the state of Montana illustrated with Montana artwork, photographs and artifacts. The book was intended as a textbook for 7th and 8th graders but has great appeal to anyone interested in Montana history and culture.

Requiem for Locusts by Wendy Parciak, published by Two Canoes Press. Marzita is a mentally ill newcomer to the Locust Street neighborhood, a place where no one seems to really know each other. This debut novel gives insight into the world of mental illness and what happens when neighbors confront the chaos in their own lives.

Saving Homewaters by Gordon Sullivan, published by Countryman Press. Key conservation and restoration policies between 1900 and 1972 that set the stage for protecting Montana's streams and rivers from pollution and neglect are examined. Many of the biologists, anglers, and political leaders of today are also interviewed as they continue the environmental fight for clean water.

The Montana Book Award was founded by the Friends of the Missoula Public Library in 2002 and winners are selected by a committee of individuals representing areas throughout Montana. Members of the 2008 Montana Book Award committee included Honore Bray, Missoula; Della Dubbe, Cut Bank; Jan Jelinek, Billings; Anne Kish, Twin Bridges; Mark Miller, Bozeman; Linda Minich, Butte; and Samantha Pierson, Libby. The acting chair is Barbara Theroux, Missoula.

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