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REVIEW: Flamingo's First Christmas

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next. The journey of Shay and Nona is a lighthearted read that will allow the reader to see the importance of facing and embracing our past hurts in order to enjoy what life has in store for us. This book will appeal to women of all ages, races and economic classes. This book of fiction also supplies the reader with a small treat: Nona's Orange Mint Tea and Orange Mint and Honey Butter Cookie recipes.

— Reviewed by **Katrina Cooks**
Augusta Technical College Library

JUVENILE

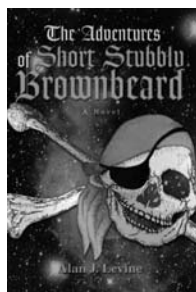
Flamingo's First Christmas by Nancy Raines Day; Illustrated by Fiona Robinson (Harry N. Abrams, 2005; ISBN: 0-8109-5765-5, \$15.95).



Red and green lights at Christmas time — what's so strange about that? Well, if you're a flamingo living in the bright, hot sands of Miami, it's all new to you. In this charming story, author Nancy Day's character, Flamingo, sets out to answer the question, "What is Christmas?" The reader journeys along with Flamingo as he searches for Christmas in a line of children waiting to see Santa, in busy holiday shopping traffic, and in an expensive department store. It isn't until Flamingo stumbles upon a live Nativity play that he truly begins to understand the meaning of Christmas. Day's humorous take on the frustrations of the season through the eyes of her feathered protagonist is a joy and provides a nice juxtaposition to the poignancy of the Nativity scene ending the story. Illustrator Fiona Robinson uses interesting techniques, such as transferring pencil drawings via carbon, which she fills in with oil paints. The illustrations reflect the bright, whimsical atmosphere of Miami at Christmas time and are perfect for Flamingo's adventures. In the Nativity scene, Donkey comments that, "Maybe a flamingo is exactly what we need in our Nativity play." Donkey has the right idea. Recommended for most children's collections.

— Reviewed by **Tracy Walker**
Dawson County Public Library

The Adventures of Short Stubby Brownbeard by Alan J. Levine (iUniverse, Inc., 2006, ISBN 0-595-39248-2, \$17.95).



Get ready to set sail for adventure! Atlanta author Alan J. Levine has written an exciting book that combines science fiction and pirate adventure. Short Stubby Brownbeard

is the lesser-known cousin of Blackbeard the Pirate. Brownbeard begins life as an accountant, but a late-night sword fight with an angry group of numbers prompts him to become a pirate. He locates a ship, the *For Sale*, and gathers a crew consisting of a Sand Witch, a Troll, a Sock Gremlin and a talking cat. Brownbeard and his dysfunctional crew head to the galaxy of Sa'Laam, where they plan to rob the wealthy emperor. They meet some unusual characters along the way and uncover a terrible secret behind the vast wealth of Sa'Laam. Brownbeard and his crew must search within themselves for the courage to fight for what is right, even if it means a fight to the death. Although the story itself is wildly fantastical, there are many parallels to the real world. This book would be enjoyed by anyone who reads science fiction and would be right at home in either a high school media center or a public library.

— Reviewed by **Andrea Thigpen**
Wacona Elementary School

The Sorta Sisters by Adrian Fogelin (Peachtree Publishers, 2007; ISBN 978-1-5614-5424-2, \$15.95).



Mica Delano lives onboard the *Martina* with her father, Dr. Robin Michael Delano, an alcoholic marine biologist who is so wrapped up in his work he rarely notices his daughter. Anna Casey lives in Tallahassee, Fla., with her foster mother, Miss Johnette, a high school biology teacher. Though the girls have never met, they have a lot in common. Both girls have moved many times and have difficulty making friends. They are both very intelligent and have a love of science. Both long to have a real friend and to be a part of the crowd. At the beginning of the book, Anna receives a letter from Mica by way of Ben Floyd, who met Mica while visiting his Aunt Emma in Key West. Aunt Emma runs the marina where the *Martina* is currently docked and serves as somewhat of a surrogate mother to Mica. While Ben is visiting in Key West, he realizes that Mica reminds him of Anna and tells her all about the girl back home. Mica thinks that Anna sounds like her kindred spirit and decides they need to become friends. She writes the letter to Anna and includes a janthina shell as a gift. The girls begin to exchange letters and scientific specimens and develop a great bond. Since neither has siblings, they agree they should be sorta sisters. Through letters, they share their hopes, fears, struggles and insecurities and hope to one day meet. This book is highly recommended for middle school girls and Fogelin fans. The characters are real, and readers will be drawn in by the vivid descriptions of the Florida scenery.

— Reviewed by **Nikki Terrell**
Lowndes Middle School Media Center