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Saturday, Sep 6, 2008

## Books

Posted on Thu, May. 08, 2008

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MY Y! BOOKMARK

### KARLA MASS: The week's most talked about book

May 9 - 15

"ANCIENT EGYPT: A FIRST LOOK AT PEOPLE OF THE NILE" BY BRUCE STRACHAN

My mother has a unique approach for encouraging children to read. She seeks out reading material for her grandchildren, usually on some boring topic like ethics or religion. She then forwards the books to the lucky recipients without revealing that 10 one dollar bills are stashed between the pages. She patiently awaits a phone call, from child or parent, thanking her profusely for the discovery of hidden cash. The phone call never comes, and the cleverly hidden money is an undiscovered treasure.

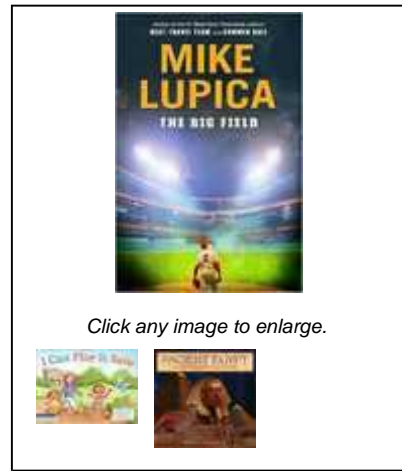
Well, that's one way of getting children to read, but so far, it's not working ... at least not for my mother. There is a better way of getting books into the hands of children.

Children's Book Week is an annual event that began in 1919. Public libraries go all out for this national celebration of children's literature. Activities include creative book cover contests, book readings, sleepovers, author presentations, bumper sticker contests and even a favorite book contest. There's a lot of positive buzz, including my personal praises, about a new children's book titled, "Ancient Egypt: A First Look at People of the Nile," by author and illustrator Bruce Strachan. He successfully resurrects a kingdom that existed two thousand years ago.

Egyptian civilization is known for pyramids, temples, elite scribes, mineral wealth and intricate artwork. Artistic standards are high and towering pyramids, located on the west side of the Nile, are among the most famous sites in the world, including richly decorated palaces of geometric designs. The Great Pyramid of Giza is touted as one of the seven wonders of the ancient world.

Strachan simplifies a rich and fascinating Egyptian culture for young readers. He details the people, the vast landscape and how the presence of the Nile River plays a key role in the growth of agriculture, transportation and religion, to name a few.

Burial customs are elaborate and involve preserving the body in mummification and



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performing burial ceremonies. Wealthy Egyptians bury their dead in stone tombs, along with treasures, food and wine.

The most fascinating substance of this book are Strachan's beautiful, lifelike and three-dimensional illustrations. His creativity depicts a grand and religious environment. Bold and rich colors combine with simple words to transport young readers to the ancient kingdom of Egypt.

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**CHILDREN'S BOOK WEEK IS MAY 12 - 18**

*Ancient Egypt: A First Look at People of the Nile*

**Ages:** 8 to 12  
**Author:** Bruce Strachan  
**Illustrator:** Bruce Strachan  
**Publisher:** Henry Holt & Company  
**Publication Date:** August 2008

 [Listen to an excerpt from \*Ancient Egypt: A First Look at People of the Nile\*](#)

**MORE CHILDREN'S TITLES WORTH TALKING ABOUT**

*Abraham Lincoln Comes Home*

**Ages:** 6 to 10  
**Author:** Robert Burleigh  
**Illustrator:** Wendell Minor  
**Publisher:** Henry Holt & Company  
**Publication Date:** August 2008



*The Big Field*

**Ages:** 9 to 12  
**Author:** Mike Lupica  
**Publisher:** Penguin Group USA  
**Publication Date:** March 2008

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*I Can Play It Safe*

**Ages:** 5 to 8  
**Author:** Alison Feigh  
**Illustrator:** Laura Logan  
**Publisher:** Free Spirit Publishing, Inc.  
**Publication Date:** April 2008

*"The Week's Most Talked About Book" is a weekly book review and literary criticism column that publishes every Friday. Selected titles are based on popularity, public opinion, research and observation. Questions, comments and suggestions should be sent to book lover and columnist Karla Mass at [kmass@mcclatchyinteractive.com](mailto:kmass@mcclatchyinteractive.com). She is a content producer for McClatchy Interactive.*

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