



# Book BUZZ Picks

## Youngest Pick

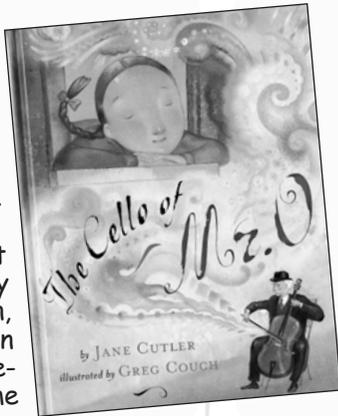
### "The Cello of Mr. O"

Imagine burning books to stay warm and going days without food. This is often the case when a country is attacked. A little girl must endure these conditions in "The Cello of Mr. O," by Jane Cutler.

The girl's father, like most of the village men, is away fighting in the war. Only women, children and old people remain in the town. One elderly gentleman, Mr. O, passes the time playing lovely songs on his cello.

The little girl and her friends think Mr. O is crabby. They live in the same run-down apartment house, and Mr. O constantly yells at them to be quiet. To get back at him, the children pop paper bags outside his door to make him think bombs are exploding.

When real rockets hit the town square, their opinion of Mr. O changes, and the children give back to him as he has given to them with the gift of his music. Illustrations by Greg Couch portray a country under siege with depth and feeling.



As we kickoff a new school year, Newsbee would like to thank all the organizations, businesses and individuals who reach deep to provide books for area students. Now, kids, show these kind folks your stuff — send me a review on my August Picks, "The Toy Farmer," "The Chicken-Chasing Queen of Lamar County" and "Rosa Farm." I'll be accepting reviews on these titles until Sept. 15.



## Middle Pick

### "One Thousand Tracings, Healing the Wounds of World War II"

After World War II, Germans, and other Europeans were in great need. Americans answered the call for help, and sent care packages to the families. "One Thousand Tracings, Healing the Wounds of World War II," by Lita Judge, focuses on one family's compassion for those left destitute by the war.

Lita Judge's father got back from the war in December 1946. It was a joyous homecoming, but then a letter arrived from the Kramers, a German family the Judges haven't heard from since before the war. The letter says many German people have no food, clothes, or shoes.

The Judge family sends a package and receives a thank-you from Mr. Kramer, "Please send no more to me. Help others."

The letter prompts the Judges and other Americans to start a project to provide shoes for the needy—they urge Europeans to send tracings of their feet so that shoes can be mailed to them. More than 3,000 people in 15 countries receive shoes, food, clothes and toys in a humanitarian effort that creates lifelong friendships.



## Picks Focus on Hope in Hard Times

Life isn't always a bowl of cherries — especially when countries are at war. This month marks an important anniversary — on Sept. 1, 1939, World War II was declared in Europe, when Germany invaded Poland. Your parents and grandparents might be talking about this war because of a seven-part television special that will soon air. It's called "The War." The Public Broadcasting special will begin Sept. 23. "Hope in Hard Times" is what's needed when things get rough. The characters in my September Picks struggle, yet they make the best of things — they are beacons of hope for us all.

## Oldest Pick

### "Someone Named Eva"

It would be hard for any of us to imagine being kidnapped from our homes, separated from our parents, taken to live in a country where we're forced to accept a new name and learn the language of our enemy.

This nightmare happened during World War II to Milada, an 11-year-old girl from Czechoslovakia. Milada had to leave all she loved behind when Hitler's Nazis invaded her homeland. She was taken to Poland, renamed Eva and punished if she spoke anything but German.

"Someone Named Eva," by Joan M. Wolf is a work of fiction inspired by actual events that happened in Lidice, Czechoslovakia.

At Lebensborn, a type of Nazi training facility, Eva is treated cruelly and doesn't have any choice but to cooperate with her captors. Once her training is complete, she's placed in the home of a high-ranking German officer and his family. The process was called "Germanization."

Eva must endure incredible hardship, yet she remains courageous, determined to survive. Her inspirational story is one that serves to remind us to be grateful for all the freedoms we too often take for granted.

