

southwest

# books

of the year 2004

## Children's Books Top Picks

### Ancient Dwellings of the Southwest

by Derek Gallagher, illustrated by Sally Blakemore, pop-up design and production by Arty Projects Studio, Ltd., paper engineering by Eileen Banashek, Sally Blakemore and Anthony Espersen, Western National Parks Association, 5-10 years.

The marvels of pop-up books delight all ages – and this one is no exception. Four of the best-known ruins in the Southwest (Chaco, Casa Grande, Bandelier, Mesa Verde) and the contemporary Taos Pueblo come to life in wondrous 3-D detail and text. Open gently and find the tabs for the moving parts – and be sure to turn the open pages around! You'll observe customs and daily routines in these cleverly designed abodes.

### Armadilly Chili

by Helen Ketteman, illustrated by Will Terry, Albert Whitman & Co., 5-8 years.

An industrious armadillo is rebuffed by her desert friends (a tarantula, bluebird, and horned toad) as she asks for help in gathering ingredients for her tasty chili. When they are later aroused by its smell, she retorts, "no workin' with Billie, no sharin' the chili!" This new version of "The Little Red Hen" folktale acknowledges a missing ingredient – and a lesson is learned. Vibrant colors and clever costumes capture a southwestern landscape and culture.

### Bedtime in the Southwest

by Mona Hodgson, illustrated by Renee Graef, Rising Moon (risingmoonbooks.com), 2-5 years

What happens when Mama or Papa says it's time for bed? Hodgson and Graef depict ramblunctious and evasive antics as possibilities that cleverly match the young critters' habits. But in the end, the charm of the winsome characters, the warmth of the softly pencil-colored scenes, and the lilting rhyme of the tale gently guide the listener toward cooperative bedtime behavior.

### Climbing the Rainbow

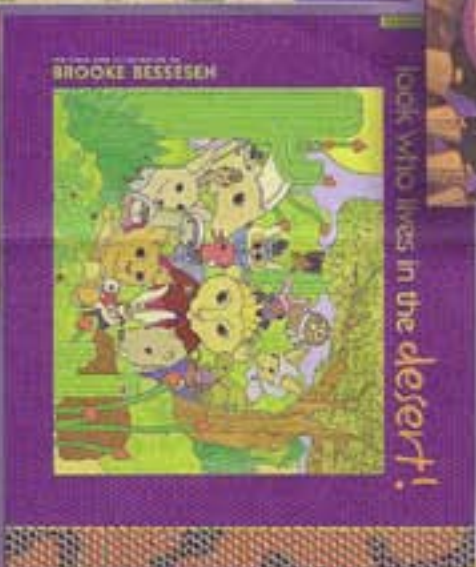
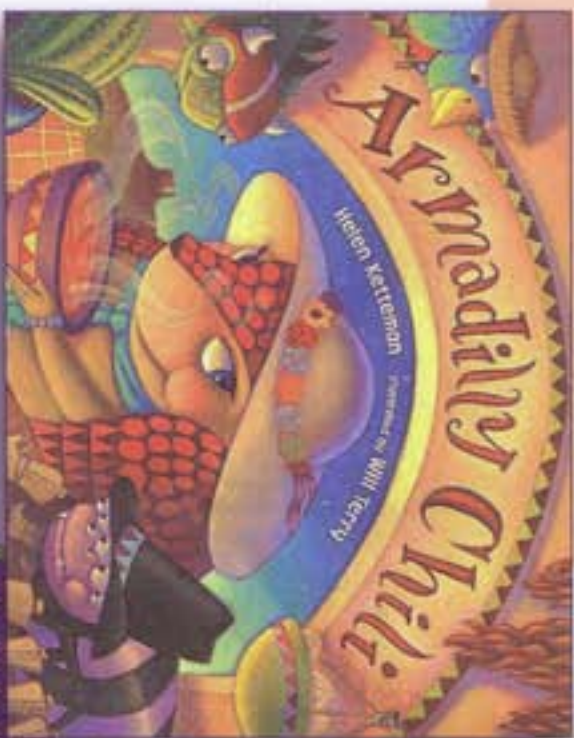
by Joy N. Hulme, HarperCollins, 8-12 years.

Quilt blocks created by 10-year-old Dora commemorate the hardships, sorrows, and joys of homesteading in New Mexico in the early 1900s. Hulme has fictionalized a friend's childhood memories, including grim realities such as the death and funeral of a child's closest friend, with heartfelt wisdom, grace, and honesty.

### Ghost Fever/Mal de Fantasma

by Joe Hayes, Cinco Puntos Press, 9-12 years.

Masterful bilingual storyteller Joe Hayes can make you believe in ghosts! A 14-year-old girl dies suddenly while plans for her quinceañera are being made. Years later the house where she lived appears haunted. This fictional tale rings so true that you think it's from Hayes' own memories of growing up in a small Arizona town. His vivid descriptions of the scenes and thoughtful portrayal



of the characters' hardships and dreams can be read in English and Spanish.

### Look Who Lives in the Desert

by Brooke Bessesen, Arizona Highways Books, 3-9 years.

Drawing on her background as a wildlife expert, journalist, and veterinary technician, Bessesen has designed a captivating introduction to 21 desert animals for the young reader. Sty, humorous touches in the patchwork-style illustrations, coupled with "fascinating facts" in sidebars, create revealing looks into the creatures' habitats and traits.

*Selections by Deborah Bock, Tucson-Pima Public Library reference librarian, and curator of the Elizabeth Steinheimer Collection of Southwest Books for Children and the Arizona Collection.*

*For an annotated list of other children's books published this year, go to Southwest Books of the Year - Best Books 2004 at <http://www.tppf.org/page Turner>.*