

## THE GHOST'S GRAVE

### Louisiana Young Readers' Choice Award Nominee 2008 Grades 3-5

Submitted by Johnice Dominick, Graduate Student, LSU School of Library & Information Science (Professor: Dr. Margie Thomas); and Kellie Raxsdale, Student, University of Louisiana at Lafayette (Instructor: Dorothy Grimsley)

**The Ghost's Grave** by Peg Kehret. Dutton Children's Books, 2005. 210 pages.

#### Summary

Josh's plans for a great summer are ruined when he is sent to the old coal-mining town of Carbon City to stay with an elderly aunt. He is convinced that Aunt Ethel is crazy. She fires a rifle in the kitchen to kill a bat, and she insists that the noisy peacock is her reincarnated dead sister. Josh has no television, no video games and no friends, so he starts spending his time reading in a tree house in the woods. However, Josh's life goes from boring to dangerous when he meets a ghost named Willie. Back in 1903, Willie had lost his leg and then died in a mining accident. He has been unable to rest because his leg was buried in one grave and his body in another. Willie wants Josh to dig up his leg and put it with his body. Josh senses trouble coming and he is correct. While digging up Willie's leg, Josh finds a box of money that was stolen and buried there by the thief. When the thief discovers that Willie has the money, Willie's life is in danger. The exciting conclusion neatly resolves all of the mysteries, and gives Josh a new perspective on small town life, and shows that Aunt Ethel is not crazy after all.

#### Author's Biography

Peg Kehret is a prolific author of popular children's books. The characters in her stories are ordinary kids who find themselves in unusual situations. Animals are also featured in many of her books. Peg Kehret likes to work with animals through the Humane Society and often sees wild animals at her home near Mount Rainier National Park in Washington State. Her books have won numerous awards, including the Henry Bergh Award from the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, the Golden Kite Award, the PEN Center Award in Children's Literature, and several state young reader awards.

<http://www.pegkehret.com/bioframe.html>

<http://www.pegkehret.com/>

<http://www.edupaperback.org/showauth2.cfm?authid=142>

#### Other Titles by Peg Kehret

*Abduction*

*Cages*

*Earthquake Terror*

*Escaping the Giant Wave*

*Horror at the Haunted House*

*Saving Lilly*

*Shelter Dogs: Amazing Stories of Adopted Strays*

*The Stranger Next Door*

*Terror at the Zoo*

*The Volcano Disaster*

## Related Titles

### Ghosts

*The Ghost Belonged to Me and Ghosts I Have Been* by Richard Peck.

*The Ghost of Cutler Creek* by Cynthia DeFelice.

*The Ghost of Nicholas Greebe* by Tony Johnston.

*The Ghost of Thomas Kempe* by Penelope Lively.

*The Ghost Sitter* by Peni R. Griffin.

*A Ghost Story* by Nina Crews.

*The Old Willis Place* by Mary Downing Hahn.

### Nonfiction about Coal Mining

*Growing Up in Coal Country* by Susan Campbell Bartoletti.

## Classroom Connections

### Cookie Mining & Formation

- [http://www.teachcoal.org/lessonplans/cookie\\_mining.html](http://www.teachcoal.org/lessonplans/cookie_mining.html)  
This lesson plan involves students mining for chocolate chips in cookies while using play money to purchase the supplies to do the mining.
- [http://www.teachcoal.org/lessonplans/coal\\_formation.html](http://www.teachcoal.org/lessonplans/coal_formation.html)  
This lesson plan introduces scientific experiments and science concepts related to coal.
- Have students create their own timeline about the history of mining in the United States. See the following website for an interactive timeline:  
<http://library.thinkquest.org/J003298F/history.htm#Interactive%20Timeline>.
- Have students find out about the minerals that are mined in their state. Have them gather information, pictures, articles, or maps and then put together a poster.
- Have students read and discuss the words to a coal miner's song that is located at the following web site: <http://unionsong.com/u016.html>.
- Have students complete a word search that includes important words in the coal mining industry. The worksheet can be found at:  
<http://www.coaleducation.org/lessons/lesson.htm>.
- Have students do research and write a paper about what it was like to be a coal miner in the 1800's.

## Web Sites

### 42Explore

<http://www.42explore.com/mining.htm>

This site provides student activities and many links to other websites about coal mining. Topics include: the process of coal mining; what life was like for early miners; mining and the environment; women in mining; and technology in mining.

### MSHA'S Kid's Page

<http://www.msha.gov/KIDS/KIDSHP.HTM>

This site describes what life was like for miners in the past. It also discusses safety and its importance in and out of the mines.

### UMWA

<http://umwa.org/mining/colminrs.shtml>

This web site is very useful. It describes the different types of coal mining. It also describes what life was like for miners in the past as well as the present.

**Dunlap Coke Ovens Photos**

<http://www.cokeovens.com/oldphotos/index.html>

This interesting website includes old photographs of coke ovens used in mining.

**Department of Labor**

<http://www.msha.gov/KIDS/KIDSHP.HTM>

This is a website specifically for kids about mining and mining safety.

**Kentucky Coal Education**

<http://www.coaleducation.org/lessons/lesson.htm>

This web site includes information about the formation of coal and the importance of coal as a fuel with activities and a question and answer guide about fossil fuels.

**Energy Kid's Page**

<http://www.eia.doe.gov/kids/energyfacts/sources/non-renewable/coal.html>

This web site explains how we get coal; how it is transported; the different types of coal; and how coal mining affects our environment.

**KidsReads.com**

<http://www.kidsreads.com/reviews/0525461620.asp>

This site gives a good description of the book *The Ghost's Grave*.