



**Jesse White**  
SECRETARY OF STATE

**NEWS**

**ILLINOIS SECRETARY OF STATE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**White Announces Richard Peck Reading Contest For Print Disabled Youth**

**SPRINGFIELD** — Secretary of State and State Librarian Jesse White announced today that a reading contest will begin next month for print disabled youth that will culminate with participants having the chance to meet 2001 Newbery Award winning author Richard Peck during the 2001 Illinois Authors Book Fair.

"Pick a Peck of Books" will allow blind and physically handicapped students in grades 5 through 12 to read any of a number of books written by Peck, and have the chance to win an audio book by the author. The contest will run from Sept. 1 through Oct. 20. Each contest participant will also be invited to meet Peck and receive a signed certificate during the Illinois Authors Book Fair Oct. 27 at the Illinois State Library in Springfield.

"I am delighted that Richard Peck will be our featured author at this year's Illinois Authors Book Fair, and I hope this contest will expose print disabled youth to the extraordinary works of one of this state's most distinguished native authors," said White. "Many young print disabled readers enjoy books and other reading materials thanks to services provided by the Illinois State Library Talking Book and Braille Service, the Talking Book Centers of Illinois and the Library of Congress/National Library Service program. All of these outstanding agencies are coming together to help co-sponsor this unique reading enrichment program for some of our most terrific young people in Illinois."

Peck, a native of Decatur, won the 2001 John Newbery

Award, the most prestigious award in children's literature, for his book *A Year Down Yonder*. He has published more than 20 books. Peck will join other authors in signing their books for patrons at the Book Fair on Saturday, Oct. 27.

White said students wishing to participate in the reading contest should contact their local Illinois Talking Book Center or the Illinois State Library Talking Book and Braille Service for additional information.