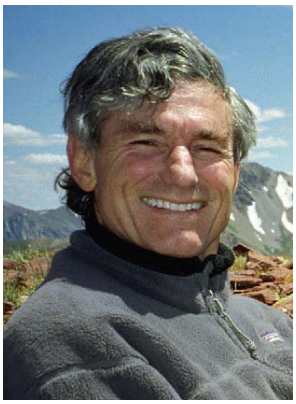
Meet: T.A. Barron



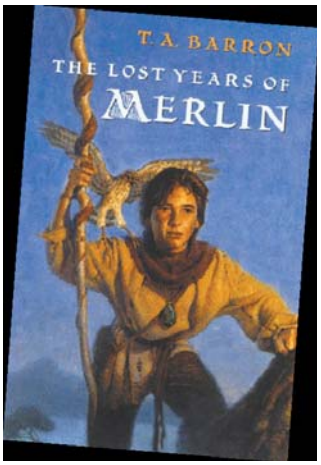
Coloradoan T.A. Barron has authored a staggering 24 books including *The Lost Years of Merlin, The Great Tree of Avalon* and *The Adventures of Kate*. Each of his books has a lesson for kids to learn about their own abilities. His Gloria Barron Prize for Young Heroes, named for his mother, furthers that message, "to honor outstanding young leaders who have made a significant positive difference to people and our planet." The father of five children, ages 12-21, gives his advice for helping to bring out the best in our children.

Q: Do you always try to provide a lesson in your books?

A: Yes, always. For example in *The Lost Years of Merlin* and *The Great Tree of Avalon*, Merlin is a real human being with struggles…joys and aspirations and hidden deep within, a remarkable talent. Just like Merlin, all of us have hidden struggles and hidden potential - and the ability to reach for the stars. That's why all my books feature a young hero, boy or girl.

Q: What was it about your mother that inspired you to create The Gloria Barron Prize for Young Heroes?

A: My mother was an unsung hero. She worked for twenty years to create the "Touch Museum" of Natural History at the Colorado School for the Deaf and Blind. She instilled in each of her seven children the idea that one individual can make a lasting difference in the lives of others.



Q: What have you done with your own children to encourage them to be "heroes"?

A: I'm convinced that our job as parents boils down to helping them discover their best selves, their truest motivations. I encourage my children to find and follow their own passions; teach them to ride out the storms and provide ample positive comments to support them through the process. Each and every child harbors hidden capacities, hidden gifts, and hidden magic, as well. And that inner magic can triumph over negative messages – especially if that magic is mixed with generous portions of love, trust and confidence. Though our children are with us for only a brief time, we can still do much to help them discover and appreciate their own inner voices. If they can hear those voices, they can shape their own lives. And if they can shape their own lives, they can certainly shape the world around them.

Do you know an outstanding young leader that you would like to nominate for The Gloria Barron Prize for Young Heroes? Visit www.barronprize.org for details. Nomination deadline is April 30, 2010. For more information about T.A. Barron and his books, visit www.tabarron.com.

WIN! Three lucky winners will receive one of T.A. Barron's books: *The Lost Years of Merlin*, *High as a Hawk* (about a brave Colorado girl) or *To Walk in Wilderness*, a Colorado nature book with photos by John Fielder. Enter in the Contest Corner at ColoradoParent.com.