

**Name:** Susan Ringer

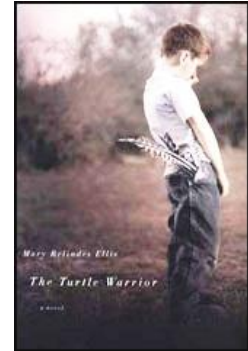
**Town of residence:** Fond du Lac Public Library

**Title:** Turtle Warrior

**Author:** Mary Relindes Ellis

**Year published:** 2004

**Briefly describe what this book is about:** Set in northern Wisconsin, 1967 to 2000. The Lucas family lives on a failing farm. John Lucas, the father, is an abusive alcoholic, and Claire, the mother, is emotionally fragile. Older son Jimmy and younger son Bill sometimes spend time with the childless couple next door to escape their family life. Bill is the turtle warrior of the title because he played with a wooden sword and a turtle shell as a shield. After Jimmy enlists in the Marines and goes to Vietnam, younger Bill, a gentle child, now has to bear the brunt of his father's abuse. But it's not revealed until the end how badly Bill has been scarred. This is a sad book but powerful with an optimistic ending.



**What did you love about the book?** I like books by Wisconsin authors and set in Wisconsin. The book made me think about the Vietnam War, spirituality and relationships in and outside a family. This is a serious book, but I like that it ends on a positive note.

**What was your least favorite thing about the book?** The themes of abuse and grief are powerful and unpleasant.

**What would you ask the author of this book?** Are the characters and setting based on people and places you actually know?

**Who do you think would like this book?** People who like books set in Wisconsin or stories of healing and redemption. People who can handle the theme of family abuse.

**What are you going to read next?** "How High the Moon," by Sandra Kring, another book set in Wisconsin by a Wisconsin author. Then "The Ledge," by Richard Curtis Hauschild, a novel about Fond du Lac.