

Between the Bookends

By Nancy Burch, Librarian
Vernonia Public Library



If last month's news article from the library seemed a little strange, it was the article from September 2001, that was e-mailed by mistake to *The Independent*. To rectify that, this article will update information that was really intended for publication last month as well as impart the latest library news.

Jane Kirkpatrick's visit to the library, September 22nd was well attended and well received. She is a very entertaining speaker and her presence here was an honor and a pleasure for those in attendance.

Paul Michael Clock, the author of *Punk, Rotten & Nasty*, gave a wonderfully informative presentation on Saturday, October 12th. The group that was fortunate to be present was properly impressed with the slides and with the information about the saga of the Pacific Railway & Navigation Company.

The two new computers granted the library by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation are operable for word processing, research on both Encarta Encyclopedia and Atlas, and for use with four Magic School Bus games. A trainer from the Foundation was here for two days, setting up the computers and working with staff on their operation. As of this publication, there are yet some problems (inoperable "A" drives, a strange anti virus message and no Internet access via radio connection). A technical support person will again be here, before the end of October, to correct the computer problems and L.V. Schoonover is working to get an antenna in place to pick up the signal for radio connection. As soon as the problems have been solved, local organizations will be contacted and invited to view and use the new computers with the improved Internet system.

The novel that has lately been most requested in the library is *The Lovely Bones*, by Alice Sebold. There are still four "reserves" that have been placed on this book, so a wait is in store for anyone wishing to read the library's one copy of this book. Other new books include *Blessings* by Anna Quindlen, *The Apprentice* by Tess Gerritsen, *The Chili Queen* by Sandra Dallas, *No One to Trust* by Iris Johansen, *Killjoy* by Julie Garwood, *Shrink Rap* by Robert B. Parker, *Nights in Rodanthe* by Nicholas Sparks, *Better to Rest* by Dana Stabenow, *The Murder Book* by Jonathan Kellerman, *Skeletons* by Kate Wilhelm and *Thin Walls* by Kris Nelscott. (Both Kate Wilhelm and Kris Nelscott are Oregon authors, with Wilhelm living in Eugene and Nelscott residing on the Oregon Coast.)

In J.A. Jance's latest release, *Partner in Crime*, J.P. Beaumont

is sent to Bisbee, Arizona, to assist Sheriff Joanna Brady. These are Ms. Jance's two popular protagonists, brought together for the first time as they combine skills to find the killer of an artist who died while supposedly under the conscientious protection of the government. Beaumont and Brady, after resolving territorial boundaries, form an effective and interesting law-enforcement team. It will be interesting to see whether Jance continues to combine these two characters in her future novels.

Two other authors who have been very popular with local library patrons are Earlene Fowler and Jennifer Chiaverini. Both of these authors incorporate information about quilts and quilt patterns into their novels. Titles include *The Quilter's Apprentice*, *The Cross-Country Quilters*, *Irish Chain*, *Steps to the Altar*, *Arkansas Traveler*, and *Seven Sisters*.

The novel that I most look forward to reading is *Blue Shoe* by Anne Lamott. The book jacket describes the main character, Mattie Ryder, as "...marvelously neurotic, well-intentioned, funny, religious, sarcastic, tender, angry, and broke. And her life at the moment is a wreck, her marriage has failed, her mother is failing, her house is rotting, her waist is expanding....she has a crush on a married man...." Then Mattie finds a small, rubber, blue shoe and a few other trifles that were left years ago in her deceased father's car. These items are said to hold clues to her messy upbringing and, as Mattie and her brother follow these clues to uncover secrets of their past, this reader will be right there with them.

The book discussion group will meet next on Thursday, Nov. 14 at 7:00 p.m. in the library. Books being discussed this month are *The Long Rain* by Peter Gadol and *The Bee Season* by Myla Goldberg. All are invited to attend and help choose the next selections.

The Friends of the Library will next be meeting December 3 at 7:00 p.m. An upcoming project for the organization will be wrapping books at Barnes & Noble on Saturday, December 14.

Monday mornings at 10:30 will find pre-schoolers meeting for their regular story time, followed by a related craft. The Reading Enrichment Program, for older children, has been funded again this year by a grant obtained by the Columbia County Commission on Children & Families. This program is under the leadership of Trish Maldonado and will take place at 3:30 on Mondays when school is in session. Youngsters ages 5-12 are encouraged to share the stories and crafts offered at the library through this program.

French lessons offered locally

Beginning and Intermediate French classes for adults and older teens, will be offered in Vernonia starting in January 2003. For information on curriculum or Portland Community College credits, call instructor Madeleine Gendron at 503-429-9402.

Anyone interested in children's classes may also call Gendron, a Vernonia resident who teaches at Alliance Française de Portland.

Show on historic county buildings

"Historic Treasures of Columbia County", a slide show and community discussion of historic buildings and sites, will be held Nov. 12, 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. at Columbia Center, 375 S. 18th Street in St. Helens.

This event is presented by Columbia County Land Development Services; Moderator Ann Fulton, and Portland State University Department of History.

For more information, call 503-397-1139.

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