

Between the Bookends

by Nancy Burch, Librarian
Vernonia Public Library



I consider the authors of fiction to be most excellent when they not only create an intriguing storyline, but insert tidbits of reality that make me want to find out more about these true characters or events. From my perspective, author Dana Stabenow, in her latest Alaskan mystery, has crafted one such novel in *Though Not Dead*. In this, the eighteenth of Ms. Stabenow's novels featuring native investi-

gator, Kate Shugak, long-lost family secrets are interwoven with epic Alaskan history. When Kate's beloved uncle, Old Sam, dies, he bequeaths her a remote cabin and a cryptic message, "Find my father". As Kate probes into the old man's life, she discovers a tangle of confusing and surprising bits of information, including his association with Dashiell Hammett, whom he apparently met in the Aleutians during World War II. The ensuing search on which Kate embarks is the basis for this gripping story with nearly fatal consequences.

Then—I became curious about Dashiell Hammett, and found that he was a private in the army where he edited an Alaskan army camp newspaper during World War II. Hammett, the creator of the Sam Spade (*The Maltese Falcon*) and the Nick and Nora Charles (*The Thin Man*) mysteries, became one of the many victims of the super-patriotic hysteria that characterized post-war American political life. His books were branded subversive by the committee headed by the infamous Joseph McCarthy, and he spent his last years in seclusion, prior to his death in 1961.

The other information presented in Stabenow's novel that intrigued me and stimulated my interest involved Castner's Cutthroats, the unofficial name for the 1st Alaskan Combat Intelligence Platoon who were instrumental in defeating the Japanese during World War II in the Aleutian Islands. These men, who were skilled at thriving in the tough conditions of the Alaskan wilderness, included native Aleuts and Eskimos, sourdough prospectors, hunters, trappers and fishermen. Their backgrounds in survival and hunting made them ideal scouts.

If your interest has been aroused as mine was on either of these topics, the library has copies of two of Hammett's books—*The Maltese Falcon* and *Red Harvest*, as well as *Castner's Cutthroats: Saga of the Alaska Scouts* and *The Thousand-Mile War: World War II in Alaska and the Aleutians*.

Those who enjoyed the movie, *The Blind Side*, might wish to read Michael Lewis', *The Blind Side: Evolution of a Game* or Michael Oher's own book entitled, *I Beat the Odds*.

Another example of ideas in one book triggering interest in further reading on a subject involves the book that was chosen for March Book Discussion. Laura Hillenbrand's, *Unbroken: A World War II Story of Survival, Resilience and Redemption*, tells Louis Zamperini's story. If you want to read additional material about how this Olympic-caliber long distance runner survived as a prisoner of the Japanese, and how he overcame this traumatic experience, you might read *Devil at my Heels* or *Prisoners of the Japanese: POWs of World War II in the Pacific*. If you have read this book or wish to listen in on the discussion, it will take place

Monday, March 28 at 5:30 p.m. in the library.

Keeping with this theme of delving deeper into topics, the library, in association with Oregon Humanities, will be hosting a Conversation Project entitled, *The Voters Have Spoken: Oregon's Controversial Ballot Initiatives*, on Thursday, March 31st at 6:30 p.m. Dr. Jackson Miller from Linfield College will be leading discussions on the following topics: Physician-assisted suicide, marijuana and taxes—some ballot initiatives unique to Oregon. The public is encouraged to attend and take part in discussing these topics. Refreshments will be served following the presentation.

The library has recently acquired some interesting new fiction by popular authors. These include *Now You See Her* by Joy Fielding, *Treachery in Death* by J. D. Robb, *A Heartbeat Away* by Michael Palmer, *Love You More* by Lisa Gardner, *Silent Mercy* by Linda Fairstein, *The Union Quilters* by Jennifer Chiaverini and *Sing You Home* by Jodi Picoult. Remember—if a real character, topic or event mentioned in any of these novels is of particular interest to you and you wish to research it further, library staff will do its utmost to help you.

The movie for the month will be *Something's Gotta Give* starring Jack Nicholson and Diane Keaton. This romantic comedy will be shown on Thursday, March 24th at 6:30 p.m. in the library.

Saturday's book sale sponsored by the Friends of the Library was successful due to those who donated and purchased books. All money realized from this sale will be used to supplement library programs and materials. (I've heard rumors that some new chairs will be purchased with some of this money.)

The library does have federal tax forms and instruction booklets, but **NO instruction books** for state taxes—only the forms which have been printed from the Internet.

Vernonia Public Library: 701 Weed Avenue

Hours: Mon., Wed., Fri. 10 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Tues., Thu. 1:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. Sat. 10 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Preschool Story Time: Mondays, 10:30 a.m. when school is in session.

Phone: 503-429-1818

Cheney earns Eagle Scout honors



Courtesy photo.

Drew Cheney, 13, of Troop 860 in Vernonia, was awarded the Boy Scouts highest honor, Eagle Scout, in February.

To earn his Eagle Scout

honor, Cheney planned, organized and completed a project at the Tillamook Forestry Center where his Troop and other volunteers were able to clear land for reforestation. In addition, he has earned 34 Merit Badges in subjects as diverse as Camping, Environmental Science and Wilderness Survival.

Cheney comes from a long line of Eagle Scouts. His father, 10 uncles and both grandfathers also earned their Eagle Scout awards.

Pop can drive for school trips

There will be a pop can drive on April 2, from 10 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

in the covered playshed area of Vernonia schools.

This is to help raise funds for the Vernonia High School Costa Rica trip and the 8th Grade trip to Washington, D.C.

Dietary guidelines updated

Once every five years the USDA and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services reviews and publishes Dietary Guidelines for Americans. The Dietary Guidelines are meant to serve as a guide for healthy eating practices for all Americans ages two years and older.

Many chronic diseases are associated with overweight and obesity. When citizens are dealing with the health concerns of obesity and chronic disease they are unable to be productive citizens. Proper diet and an increase in physical activity are the most important factors in combating obesity and a good first step in combating chronic disease.

The 2010 Dietary Guidelines make four major recommendations:

1. Balance calories to manage weight: Total calorie intake must be controlled to prevent overweight and obesity. Physical activity plays an important role in maintaining a healthy weight. It is important to maintain this calorie balance from childhood to older age.

2. Reduce certain foods: Saturated fat should be no more than 10% of total calories. Trans fats should be limited as much as possible, and cholesterol consumption should be no more than 300 milligrams per day. It is recommended that refined grains be limited, especially the refined grains that contain solid fats, added sugars and sodium (e.g., cookies) Sodium is another thing on the list to reduce.

3. Increase certain foods: Foods to increase include fruits and vegetables, followed by whole grains, low-fat or fat-free milk and quality sources of protein like seafood.

4. Build healthy eating patterns: Nutrient needs can be met by establishing healthy eating patterns at an appropriate calorie level.

Additionally, these foods need to be prepared to assure food safety.

Source: Tammy Roberts, Nutrition and Health Education Specialist, University of Missouri Extension

Mariolino's Saturday Special

Pulled Pork Sandwich
w/Fries or Potato Salad
or Coleslaw



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