

Between the Bookends

by Nancy Burch, Librarian
Vernonia Public Library



Working in the library has meant that I've had some interesting experiences through the years. Most have been rewarding for me and hopefully for the patrons also. Usually those experiences are just taken for granted, so it was satisfying to recently receive an email from a former patron

who expressed gratitude for the exposure to literature and learning he received while using our library in the early 2000s. Just the other day a lady, who has passed through Vernonia several times traveling from California to visit relatives in Washington, expressed her appreciation for the friendliness and hospitality she has encountered in the library—and especially for the use of the clean restroom. (She insisted on making a donation to the Friends of the Library.) Of course, not all of the encounters with patrons/potential patrons have been pleasant. Some have been very vocal and adamant that they are not willing to pay the fee assessed to out of town borrowers or to pay fines for overdue materials. One time a book was returned with a bullet hole through the entire book. (It was a thick book.) Once, when we still had dial-up Internet, a patron called several (adult) numbers, with the charges appearing on the library's phone bill. As I said, it's been interesting!

My reading tastes tend to lean toward suspense novels and one of the best psychological thrillers I've come across lately is *Girl Gone* by Gillian Flynn. After reading several pages of this novel, I nearly decided to quit because I did not like, and could not relate to either of the main characters—Nick or his wife Amy. At the beginning of this novel, both of these beautiful, self-centered characters who had previously held high-profile publishing positions in New York City, have been forced to move to Nick's small hometown in Missouri. On the day of their fifth wedding anniversary, Amy disappears and Nick becomes the prime suspect in her disappearance. With the passage of time, evidence mounts pointing to Nick's having murdered his wife. As the reader comes to know both Nick

and Amy and their twisted, manipulative personalities, he/she might find comparisons to Alfred Hitchcock's thrillers. I'm definitely glad that I didn't give up on this book and don't think that even the most ardent solver of mysteries will predict the twists, turns and especially the ending created by Ms Flynn in *Girl Gone*.

Criminal, Karen Slaughter's latest novel of love, loyalty and murder encompassing forty years, has earned a four star rating from reviewers on Amazon. Followers of Slaughter's will be intrigued to learn more about the history of the enigmatic Will Trent, the dyslexic agent for Georgia's Bureau of Investigation, as he and his supervisor, Amanda Wagner, solve two riveting murders.

Heather Gudenkauf's, *One Breath Away*, is another that Amazon reviewers have given the four star rating. This novel explores how the fragile normalcy of everyday life can be easily shattered when, in the midst of a sudden spring snowstorm, an unknown man armed with a gun walks into an elementary school classroom.

Elin Hilderbrand has written about the power of community, family and honesty in her newest release, *Summerland*. This novel begins with a graduation night celebration that ends in tragedy after a horrible car crash leaves the driver of the car dead and her twin brother in a coma. The other passengers are physically unhurt, but the emotional damage is overwhelming. As the novel progresses, Hilderbrand proves that even from the ashes of sorrow, new love can still take flight.

Other new acquisitions include *porch lights* by Dorothea Benton Frank, *Tumbleweeds* by Leila Meacham, *Newport Blues* by George Byron Wright, *Sea Change* by Karen White, *Die a Stranger* by Steve Hamilton, and *Canada* by Richard Ford.

Summer Reading programs have been well planned by Jennifer Moloney and Linda Johnston and well attended by youngsters and their parents. Remember the morning activities will continue on Tuesdays through July, from 10-11 a.m. in the library, with the puppet show scheduled for Wednesday, July 18 at 6:30 p.m.

Thursday, July 26 will be movie night with the film to begin at 6:30 p.m. Monday, July 30 will be book discussion night with William Kent


Kruger's *Heaven's Keep* to be discussed beginning at 5:30.

The end of July and first of August will find members of the Friends of the Library busily preparing for the book sale to take place during Jamboree weekend on Friday, August 3 from 4-7:00 p.m. and Saturday, August 4 from 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. **Donations of books for this sale are still being accepted.**

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.
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