

"I have always imagined that paradise will be a kind of library." Jorge Luis Borges

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**IF YOU'RE BORED BY CHATTER
SKIP DOWN TO THE BOTTOM TO READ WHAT
BOOKS ARE HERE OR RECENTLY PUBLISHED.**

Chatter first.

Well, we survived our Harry Potter party.

There were about 200 Potter fans milling about waiting for midnight. Our magician kept many enthralled as they waited. Cayleen Fuhrmann won the teen costume prize, George Grey won the child prize as Creature, the house elf, Steve Edgar won the adult prize as a frightening Dementor. Nine year old Emily Turner won the gift certificate for guessing how many Bertie Botts Every Flavor Beans we had in a jar. She guessed 602 and there were 616. Now there are none! Nikki, Kelli and Amanda are my very own "hoovers." If there is food around they dispense of it quickly.

We had pre-sold 110 copies which was a happy surprise. It shows that many of you understand the value of keeping the money in your own hometown. We were able to donate a part of the price of Harry Potter #7 to our local library and, as is our commitment, we donate a portion of our net profit each month to a local charity. Your chain store, Amazon or other internet money just leaves the area for parts unknown. End of soapbox lecture. I'm getting envious of our DemonRiders Paranormal Book Club. Does anyone out there want to belong to a book club? I'm partial to mysteries or general literary fiction but could be talked into reading the classics. If there is enough response from people with similar or other interests we'll see if we can get a book club started. Come in or email your interests. One of the perks is the 20% discount off the chosen book and the camaraderie of like minded people with diverse opinions.

We have our catalogue for next year's calendars. Calendars make perfect, relatively inexpensive, yet very personal and thoughtful gifts. They usually cost around \$12.00 to \$15.00 and you can wipe out a large part of your Christmas list early, which, for me, has always been stressful. I don't like waiting until the last days. There is a calendar for practically every interest.

Last month I forgot to mention another locally owned business we frequent. I use "we" loosely because it's mostly Kelli that uses Movieland on the truck route. Whenever I go to pick a movie I end up picking what I've seen and loved before. Kelli is more adventurous so she does the picking. And, yup, Busterblock has more to choose amongst, and comestibles (!), but with Movieland you can call Diane and ask her to hold one or add on a day or week to some you forgot to return. And, best of all, you know the money you spend, come on, say it with me..."stays right here in Deland."

Several years ago when my main man, Joe, needed chemo in Orlando, I'd read to him as he drove there and back. Now, you might think that the husband of a bookstore owner who could choose amongst 200,000 books *might* be a voracious reader, right? Wrong! So the list that follows comprises the biggest part of the books he's read, er, heard. Most of what I chose to read to him were my favorites so they'll have a (2) by them.

River of Lakes is about our St. Johns River from its trickle of a beginning below Orlando through Lake Monroe and Lake George to its ending in the Atlantic at Jacksonville. This is one of the two non-fiction books I have ever read and I found it to be fascinating. Bill Belleville writes beautifully and his use of language and analogies are like poetry as he travels every inch, puddle, marsh and lake that make up the Saint Johns River. If you like to fish or boat this is a must, and a great gift for that someone you love that does or someone that appreciates a writer gifted in the use of language.

Alas Babylon (2) was written in 1959 about a group of people surviving after an atomic bomb when communication has been cut off to the rest of the world. It takes place here in central Florida and while you're trying to figure exactly where, you'll find yourself making lists of canned goods and candles and things you might need in similar circumstances. Sort of like our hurricane preparation, only multiplied.

A Land Remembered (2) and this is the biggie. It's my Joe's favorite of the 12 or so books we've read so far. It is also one of the stores constant and consistent sellers. It is a generational story of the settling of Florida and at the risk of being too effusive, it's one of those books everyone should read.

The rest of the list, without fanfare, is: Pillars of the Earth (2), Cold Mountain (2), Kite Runner (2), A Thousand Splendid Suns, 1000 White Women (2), River Gods (2), Water For Elephants (2), Life of Pi, and The Dogs of Babel.

Those of you that have read and loved, or will read and love, Water for Elephants should be aware that it was first read by independent booksellers who received advance reading copies through publishers or their local organizations. Ours is SIBA, Southern Independent Booksellers Alliance. It was the independents that read it first, talked it up, recommended and hand sold the book and, thus, brought it to the attention of the larger chains. Only then did it make the New York Times Bestseller list. It was a best seller in our stores long before then.

So...where were you on 07/ 07/ 07? No one, no one, asked for the 07% discount we offered. We'll probably try again on 08/ 08/ 08. Mark your calendars.

kelli is reading Memory Keeper's Daughter and enjoying it but not finding it as compelling as some. But then, she didn't like Cold Mountain, if you can believe *that* and doesn't like Dick Frances books!!! If I wasn't there when she was born (giggle), I'd wonder if she was really mine. So, those of you who don't like the same books she doesn't like, can have her recommend others to you. Yes, I know that sentence is fraught with double negatives.

We also have a staff picks board at the store for other opinions.

Lori, our local intellect, is reading Rule of Four by Ian Caldwell and finding it hard going but stubbornly reading on. Hardcore history (as opposed to historical fiction) is still her favorite.

Amanda and Nikki have just finished three Nocturn books, a series called Raintree, and are hand selling them like crazy. They both say they're the best they have read so far. Nikki is also reading Vanquished by Hope Tarr and looking forward to her other books. Amanda also reads comics, now also known as graphic novels, many with adult themes.

Vinnie, a volunteer, who spends a few hours each day putting books away prior to going to therapy reads mysteries.

Donna, who is our most voracious reader, is still enjoying retirement. She gets to read the advanced reading copies that come to us and recently took 3 books home.

I'm reading Soul Catcher by Michael White, which won't be available until September, and loving it. It's a pre-civil war era novel which gives us an unusual perspective into the lives of slavery and slave catchers (hence Soul Catchers). It is an important, poignant and compelling book, which will undoubtedly be chosen by many book clubs. It, along with Cold Mountain, form a boundary around the Civil War, (that pyrrhic victory won by the Union.) Kelli might even like this as it isn't told in the first person as was Cold Mountain.

I'm also reading Run by Ann Patchett who wrote the popular Bel Canto. I'm just far enough into it to wish I could just read and not have to work. It will be available in October in hardcover.

I have finished Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows and absolutely loved it. I do so understand how the kids and adults felt when getting their books at midnight. They would leave the line hugging the books to their chests and grinning. I wonder how many stayed up all night reading.

Kelli and Nikki are going on vacation. Kelli will be gone 2 weeks and when she comes back Nikki leaves for a week. I will be so totally frazzled without them.

OK so there's no room for what books are coming out. We have catalogues from SIBA for July and August so stop by and pick one up.

The harder I work, the luckier I get.

Judy

"If you have integrity, nothing else matters. If you don't have integrity, nothing else matters."