

The Book Rack Newsletter

It just makes sense to buy your books at The Book Rack!

Vol 9, #8

August 2016

4764 Elmore Ave, Davenport

563-355-2310

Store Hours: 10:00 - 6:00 Monday - Sunday

<http://www.thebookrackqc.com/>
BookRackQC@Gmail.com

Reading Trivia for August

What popular American author coined the word nerd?

Did you know?

(Don't read this while eating!)

The character, Captain Ahab, was based on Owen Chase, the first mate of a ship sunk by a sperm whale. He spent 91 days adrift on a small boat afterwards, having to eat the corpse of one of his dead friends to avoid starving to death.

August Holidays and Events at The Book Rack:

5. The Olympics begin in Rio

9. Book Lovers Day - Book reading is a great hobby. It's an important one, too. Employers look for it on resumes. Reading is educational, informative, and relaxing. It makes us both smarter, and happier people.

13. Jim Pransky will be signing copies of his new book 11-1:00

13. International Left-handers Day – In September we'll have an article for you lefties, written by Local Author Joan Mauch!

15. Relaxation Day

21. Senior Citizen Day

22. Be an Angel Day

25. Kiss and Make-up Day

27. Womens' Equality Day

Apology!! Requests are not matching.

We use a software suite called Basil to manage all aspects of our day-to-day operations from the check-out and in take of traded books to inventory management and our request service. Unfortunately, a couple weeks ago a major new edition was released and it completely blocked the Request Matching feature. Normally, when a book is added to our inventory and it's one you had requested, we're alerted by Basil and set it aside for you. That's not happening at present. I've spoken to the Basil developers several times to assert the importance of fixing this defect and to discern when it will be fixed. The current estimate is August 2 for the fix to be made. Unfortunately, the fix will likely not retroactively screen for matches since the problem occurred. I have asked that Basil develop a routine to do this, but don't know if they will. If they won't, we'll try to develop one ourselves.

Please accept our sincere apology for this problem and bear with us as we try to overcome it.

Even More Westerns added to our shelves.

We continue to look for westerns to keep up with your needs. We brought back a couple hundred more in July and if you haven't been in recently and like westerns, get to The Book Rack before other fans get all the good ones!

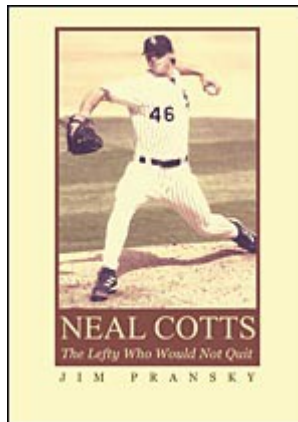
And, if you have any westerns you'd be willing to part with, please bring them in!!

Music

Are you a singer or member of a choir? We have a nice selection of choir music, church musicals, sheet music of the most popular songs of the 1920s, 30s & 40s, church camp songbooks and a few other random pieces.

Featured Author for August

Local Author Jim Pransky will be at **The Book Rack** 11:00 – 1:00 on August 13 signing copies of his books, including his latest, **NEAL COTTS: THE LEFTY WHO WOULD NOT QUIT**, which is a biography on the Major League veteran left handed reliever. Cotts was a member of the 2005 World Champion Chicago White Sox. He was drafted by Oakland in 2001 as a second round choice.



"College junior who can pitch and compete-average or better stuff now with sound feel of the zone. Like this guy's approach and will be tough to beat. Arm action is a slight concern, but stuff isn't. He repeated and baffled hitters with 75% use of fastball. Wants ball and is an excellent competitor. He has superior mound presence, good agility and held velocity late in to the game. Definite second or third round consideration."

This is part of a college free agent report on Illinois State's left-hander, Neal Cotts, from April 9, 2001, as he matched up against Missouri State's John Rheinecker in one of college baseball's memorable games.

Neal Cotts was a second round pick in 2001, made his major league debut in 2003, and was a key factor in the Chicago White Sox's World Championship in 2005.

The twenty-five-year-old was at the top of the world until a series of injuries and illnesses brought his career to a complete stop. He did not throw a pitch in a major league game for almost four years.

The man who is constantly described as humble, determined, genuine, focused, great worker, ultracompetitor with tremendous perspective refused to let an inordinate number of setbacks deter him from his goal. Simply, he wanted to finish his career on the mound, at any level.

Neal's career and his incredible journey back from the depths of a too-soon retirement is more than a baseball story. It is an inspirational tale for all ages and a tribute to one of baseball's admired performers.

On the baseball diamond or on pages filled with the written word,

Jim Pransky has always enjoyed a good story. A professional baseball scout, the Davenport resident now spends his off-season crafting stories of his own to share. In recent years, Pransky has had multiple short stories published in online publications, most written during the three months or so when he isn't on the road searching for baseball's next big thing. And now he has become a published author

Free Verse is a regular, monthly, feature by one of our wonderful Quad Cities area local authors. Each month we enjoy writing by a different talent. These articles and poems are on a variety of topics bound to be of interest to many of our readers. Please help spread the word by forwarding the newsletter to others. Give these folks as wide an audience as possible, please.

This month's Free Verse article is written by Local Author Adam Kugler.

The River

By

Adam J Kugler

There is nothing that I would rather do than sit on the banks of the Mighty Mississippi River, but I know that there are always going to be times when I would rather not. I think that it is something people do not do near often enough. I used to be afraid of the river. I'm not sure what it really was. It was something so bizarre that I could never really get used to it. Now I like to go and sit on its banks and watch the sun set down over it. At the same time there is nothing like watching the moon as it is gazing down on the river. It's kinda special. It's kinda beautiful, but there are not a lot of people that really give two thoughts to what the river is all about.

For some the raging Mississippi is one thing that they are not sure about. For others it is a source of food, and others yet it is a place for recreation. I guess that's why on a weekend afternoon you will find so many different boats out there on those waters.

But the thing that gets me, was the night that I lost a dear friend to the waters of the Mississippi River. We had gotten the call, it was about 7:30 P.M. and we were kicked back in our lawn chairs out in the back yard. It was a beautiful night, that was until the call. It was disturbing to me at first.

“Hello?” I answered, picking up the phone.

“Michael, is that you?”

“Yeah. Why?”

“It’s not good news.”

“What do you mean it’s not good news?”

“Anna is missing.”

It struck me like someone punched me in the gut.

“Missing, as in someone took her?”

“No, we think she just wandered off. Is there any way you can come out here and help us search for her?”

“Yeah, you bet.”

It was the only answer I could give. I was afraid of the things that were taking place. I was afraid of the world without Anna. She was a precious child, so precious that we all wanted to see her come home again.

When I arrived at the house there were four or five families all gathered together. David, Anna’s father, was handing out pictures of the girl. She had been a friend of my daughter’s and I didn’t want to be the bearer of bad news. I hated that.

“This is what she was last wearing.” He handed me a picture he had just printed off from his camera from earlier in the afternoon. I showed it to Jenny. She looked at it and we both recognized the outfit. It was one that we had given her for her birthday. She had always wanted to have a dress, but her parents couldn’t really afford fancy clothes, so we had stepped in and gotten her one really nice dress, and she had been wearing it that day.

I walked over and put an arm around David. “It’s going to be just fine. We’re going to find her.”

I had an idea where to look. They lived not even a block from the Mississippi River. How could anyone not think to look for her there?

As I walked slowly down the street I looked over at Emma, my wife, and I said, "I think I know where to find her."

"You do?"

"Yes."

"I think that we are going to find her near the river."

"Why is that?"

"Because she has always liked the river. It's been the one thing that she has always had. Remember her telling us a few weeks ago that it was her dream to swim across the Mississippi this summer."

"But that is just the musings of a child. You can't take that seriously."

"I think we need to."

We walked farther away from the crowd and we got to the river and sure enough there was the dress we had bought her hanging on the branch of a tree near the river. As I looked out across the waters I hoped that she was going to be standing on the other side of the river, triumphant, but I could see something out in the middle of the river.

"What is that, Michael?"

"I don't think you want to know."

"Really?"

"I think that is Anna out there. I don't have a boat, but I am guessing she tried to swim and she got across that much of the river. That is where her arms wore out and her legs gave out."

It was a tragedy in the making, and a lesson that I will never forget. As I got home and we had to explain to our daughter what had happened, it was just so hard. It was hard for her to understand how something like this could happen to a girl her own age. It was consuming. It was heartbreaking. It was not long before David and Sara moved out of the neighborhood. We have finally lost touch with them. I think that they wanted to let things go. They wanted the memories of Anna to go. And I can't say that I blame them in the least.

So now, as I look out at the river I think about all the things that I have seen, and the stories that I have heard. It is something I wish I could just forget, but I know there is nothing I could do about it. Nothing at all. So sometimes we have to appreciate nature for what it is, and understand that there is always a chance we might not make it through the day.

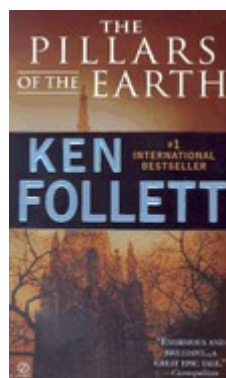


Book Reviews

Read a good or bad book lately? Send us a book review and we'll include it in the next newsletter! (We do reserve the right to edit – just in case it was a really bad book and you use really bad language!)

Our first book review is also by Jodie Toohey and first appeared June 12, 2016 in Jodie's blog,
<http://bookreviewsbyjodiet.blogspot.com/>.

The Pillars of the Earth by Ken Follett (1989)



I purchased [The Pillars of the Earth](#) by Ken Follett as recommended by two men in the Veteran's writing workshop I led. It is not the usual type of historical fiction I read, but they said it was good and they recommended it as instructive for setting up a detailed scenes as well as working in historical facts.

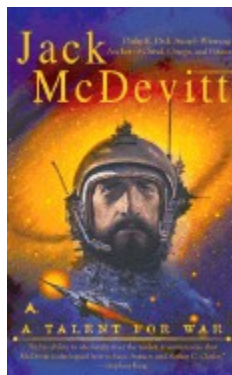
Compared to other novels I usually read, I consider *The Pillars of the Earth* an epic, taking place from 1123 through 1174 in England over 983 pages. I did think it was very well written; it drew me in and was full of romance, suspense, and action as well as historical detail. As the group members indicated, the author did an excellent job of creating twelfth century England; I easily imagined the landscape, towns, and different places. I also enjoyed learning about the evolution of church and cathedral architecture.

The story is told from the point of view of several characters and it's not clear until well into the book that the main characters are Aliena and Jack. The length of the book allowed me to get to know all of the characters intimately as well as care for them and want to find out what happened to them. However, it also took me a long time to really get into the story, though obviously it was interesting enough and grabbed me enough to motivate me to keep reading. I generally enjoy stories told from just one character's point of view and I've been known to skip sections told from a character's point-of-view about which I don't care, but I found myself caring about all of the characters enough in this book to read all of the sections.

Though this isn't the type of book I normally read, I am glad I did. It was a fascinating tale about characters I came to know and care about. And I did learn one way to weave historical facts through a story. It took me over two months to read this book, partly because of the length and partly because it took me some time to get hooked enough to keep going back to it, so, on a can't-put-it-down-scale of one for I couldn't even finish it to ten for I was up until the wee morning hours, I give the first half to two-thirds a six and the last half to one-third a seven and a half.

The rest are by me:

A Talent for War by Jack McDevitt (1989) SciFi



Everyone knew the legend of Christopher Sim. Fighter. Leader. An interstellar hero with a rare talent for war. Sim changed mankind's history forever when he forged a ragtag group of misfits into the weapon that broke the back of the alien Ashiyyur. But now, Alex Benedict has found a startling bit of information, long buried in an ancient computer file. If it is true, then Christopher Sim was a fraud. For his own sake, for the sake of history, into the very heart of the alien galaxy – where he will confront a truth far stranger than any fiction imaginable.

It's an interstellar mystery with the sleuth roaming between planets scattered across a massive galaxy spanning hundreds of light years. Benedict is a talented, daring detective and the mystery is intriguing. Through in the science fiction aspect and it's a good read. I give it a B.

Big Stone Gap by Adriana Trigiani (2000)

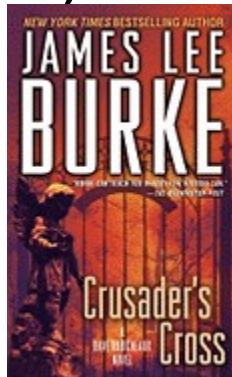


Nestled in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia, the tiny town of Big Stone Gap is home to some of the most charming eccentrics in the state. Ave Maria Mulligan is the town's self-proclaimed spinster, a thirty-five year old pharmacist with a "mountain girl's body and a flat behind." She lives an amiable life with good friends and lots of hobbies until the fateful day in 1978 when she suddenly discovers that she's not who she always thought she was. Before she can blink, Ave's fielding marriage proposals, fighting off greedy family members, organizing a celebration for visiting celebrities, and planning the trip of a lifetime--a trip that could change her view of the world and her own place in it forever. Brimming with humor and wise notions of small-town life, Big Stone Gap is a gem of a book with a giant heart. . . .

This is just a really nice book and story and very well written. I actually listened to the audio book read by the author, which I believe lent more of the intended nuance to the "reading" than you would pick up either reading it yourself, or hearing it read by another. I thoroughly enjoyed it, finding it a pleasant respite

from my more normal thrillers. I give it a B+ and encourage you to pick up one of Trigliani's several titles and give her a try.

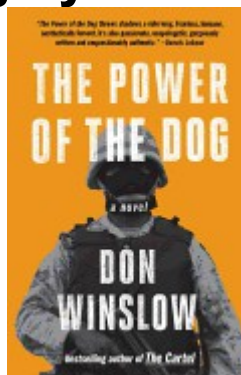
Crusader's Cross, A Dave Robicheaux Novel by James Lee Burke. (2006)



For detective Dave Robicheaux, memories -- including those of a strange and violent summer from his youth -- are best left alone. But a dying man's confession forces Robicheaux to resurrect a decades-old mystery with a missing woman at its heart. Her name may or may not have been Ida Durbin, and Robicheaux's half brother, Jimmie, paid a brutal price for entering her world. Now the truth will plunge Robicheaux into the manipulations of New Orleans' wealthiest family, into a complex love affair of his own, and into hot pursuit of a killer expanding his territory beyond the Big Easy at a frightening pace.

This is another book I listened to on audio book and, frankly, think it made it even more enjoyable. Tom Patton, the actor you've seen in Remember the Titans, The Punisher, and TV series Into the West (TNT) and The Agency (CBS), did a wonderful job seasoning the narrative with Cajun and other Louisiana accents. I give it a B and advise you to give Burke a try if you're not already hooked.

The Power of the Dog by Don Winslow (2005)

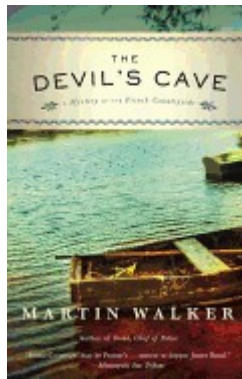


From the "New York Times" bestselling author of "The Cartel" comes an explosive novel of the drug trade that takes you deep inside a world riddled with corruption, betrayal, and bloody revenge.

The prequel to "The Cartel," and set about 10 years earlier, "The Power of the Dog" introduces a brilliant cast of characters. Art Keller is an obsessive DEA agent. The Barrera brothers are heirs to a drug empire. Nora Hayden is a jaded teenager who becomes a high-class hooker. Father Parada is a powerful and incorruptible Catholic priest. Callan is an Irish kid from Hell's kitchen who grows up to be a merciless hit man. And they are all trapped in the world of the Mexican drug Federacion. From the streets of New York City to Mexico City and Tijuana to the jungles of Central America, this is the war on drugs like you've never seen it. An explosive novel of the drug trade, "The Power of the Dog" takes you deep inside a world riddled with corruption, betrayal, and bloody revenge." Publisher's Marketing

In May's newsletter I reviewed Satori by Winslow and gave it an A. I decided it was so good I'd read another of his titles to see if he's as good as I judged him to be on the basis of one Satori. Well, he is! This is a much different book, but every bit as good and exceptionally well written. It, too, gets an A from me. I'll warn you that it is very violent and graphic, but if you like realistic, complex novels on harsh topics you'll love "Dog". Dennis Lehane said, "The Power of the Dog throws shadows a mile long. Fearless, humane, aesthetically fervent, it's also passionate, unapologetic, gorgeously written and unquestionably authentic."

The Devil's Cave by Martin Walker (2012)



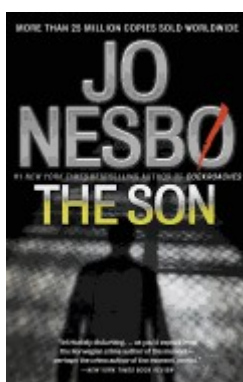
It's spring in St. Denis. The village choir is preparing for its Easter concert, the wildflowers are blooming, and among the lazy whorls of the river a dead woman is found floating in a boat. This means another case for Bruno, the town's cherished chief of police.

With the discovery of sinister markings and black candles near the body, it seems to Bruno that the occult might be involved. And as questions mount most notably about a troubling real estate proposal in the region and the sudden reappearance of an elderly countess Bruno and his colleagues are drawn ever closer to a climactic showdown in the Gouffre de Colombac: the place locals call

the Devil s Cave." With the enchanting backdrop of France's pastoral heartland, a cast of local characters as vibrant as their surroundings, enough sumptuous repasts to satisfy any literary gourmand, and a hero winningly capable of balancing the good life with a dogged dedication to solving the crimes that threaten it. Publisher's marketing

Walker has written a nice mystery, set in a beautiful locale, which he shares in his text. It's an easy, fast read that you'll enjoy if you like English country mysteries, Donna Leon or Charles Todd. I give it a B-. It just didn't have the complexity and pace I prefer.

The Son by Jo Nesbo (2015)



From [Booklist](#)

Starred Review On the surface, Nesbø's gripping new stand-alone might seem like another installment of the Harry Hole series but featuring a new cast of characters. A serial killer is at work in Oslo, and a maverick cop with his share of personal demons is on his trail. But beneath that surface, there is a complex psychological thriller churning its way into the reader's nightmares. Sonny Lofthus is in prison for crimes he didn't commit but for which he has agreed to take the fall—in exchange for an unending supply of heroin. The drugs are Sonny's way of dealing with the knowledge that his father, an apparent suicide, was a dirty cop. As the novel begins, however, Sonny has new information about his father's death and has engineered a daring escape from prison. His revenge-fueled plan is to kill those responsible for the crimes he was convicted of by re-creating the murders with the real killers now the victims. The more we learn about Sonny, the more we root for him to evade capture,

either by the police or by the crime lord who wants him dead. Juggling point of view between Sonny, Simon Kefas (the cop chasing him), and the various corrupt officials who risk exposure the longer Sonny is free, Nesbø thwarts our every attempt to draw conclusions about both what happened in the past and who is the least guilty among the principals. There is an element of the classic film noir *Breathless* at work here but with more characters of varying shades of gray whose fates hinge on numerous moving parts. A terrific thriller but also a tragic, very moving story of intertwined characters swerving desperately to avoid the dead ends in their paths. HIGH-DEMAND BACKSTORY: With 24 million copies of his books sold, Nesbø is now second only to Stieg Larsson among Scandinavian crime writers. His fame is sure to grow still more as Martin Scorsese and Leonardo DiCaprio are about to begin filming *The Snowman*. --Bill Ott

I've reviewed a couple of Nesbo's previous titles and given them well deserved "raves." He's a terrific police thriller writer. With *The Son* he has surpassed himself and given us a real gem. It has a very complex plot, a wide range of characters to love and hate, believable action and a real surprise ending. I once again give him a rousing A+ and strong recommendation. If you've not read him yet and you like hard crime thrillers, it's way past time you gave him a read.

The Big Sleep by Raymond Chandler (1939)

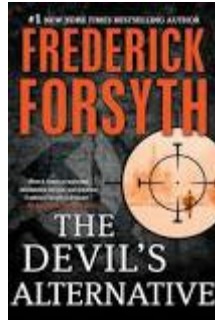


When a dying millionaire hires Philip Marlowe to handle the blackmailer of one of his two troublesome daughters, Marlowe finds himself involved with more than extortion. Kidnapping, pornography, seduction, and murder are just a few of the complications he gets caught up in.

Philip Marlow is a name nearly every mystery reader has heard. Created in this book by Chandler in 1939 he still reigns the genre. He's the prototypical private eye.

He's "wised up, hopeful, thoughtful, adventurous, sentimental, cynical and rebellious.", so says Robert B. Parker. The big sleep is a true classic and I wouldn't dare give it less than a solid A, but it earned it long ago.

The Devil's Alternative by Frederick Forsyth (1979)



Frederick Forsyth delivers a frighteningly possible novel of international terrorism and impending war.

As the Russian people face starvation, the Politburo is faced with a hard choice: negotiate with America for food, go to war for national survival, or deal with an uprising in the motherland. Through an informant, British Agent Adam Munro learns that the situation is growing dangerously tense, with powerful forces in the USSR maneuvering for supremacy.

But even as East and West conduct delicate talks, events spiral out of control and threaten to undo every step taken. The world's largest oil tanker is hijacked by terrorists, and a Ukrainian freedom fighter is rescued in a bloody catastrophe on the Black Sea. From Moscow to Washington, the stakes grow ever more perilous as the mad actions of a few threaten to engulf the entire world in nuclear war unless Munro can stop them." Publisher's marketing

This book, while over 30-years old, is strikingly relevant to today's world. It takes you inside the Kremlin, #10 Downing Street, The White House and throughout the halls of power in the US, Europe, The Soviet Union and the Middle East. It's highly complex plot, many twists and turns and surprising series of endings make it another home run for Forsyth, who is, after all, one of my favorites! It gets an A and a high recommendation.

Reading Trivia for July

What popular American author coined the word nerd?

Answer: Dr Seuss - whose real name was Theodor Seuss

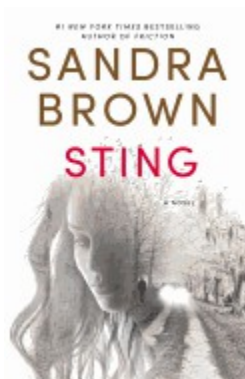
Geisel.

Upcoming New Releases:

Check out the prices following the title of the book. The first price is the publisher's price. The second price is **The Book Rack** price, which is normally 20% lower. When you pick it at the store there is no shipping cost, though we can also ship it to you. Order now by calling one of the stores or stopping in. We do ask for prepayment on all special orders. **You can also add any of these titles to your request list.** Some will come in soon and others may take a while, but most will get to you eventually. The genre follows the price.

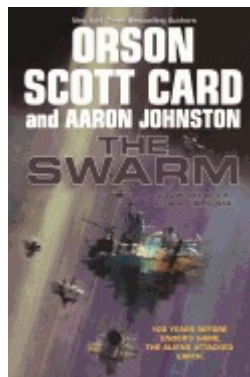
Hardcover and Trade Paperback

Sandra Brown – Sting – 26.00/20.80



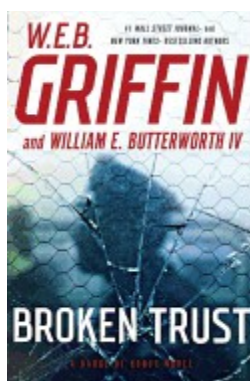
James Lee Burke – The Jealous Kind – 27.99/22.40

Orson Scott Card – The Swarm – 25.99/20.80



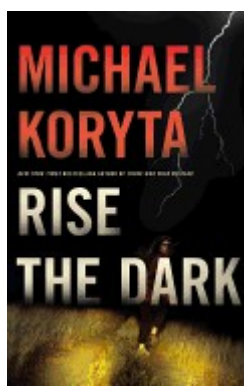
PT Deutermann – The Commodore – 26.99/21.60

WEB Griffin – Broken Trust – 28.00/22.40



Sherrilyn Kenyon – Dragonmark – 27.99/22.40

Michael Koryta – Rise the Dark – 26.00/20.80

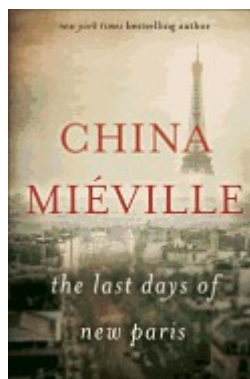


Debbie Macomber – Sweet Tomorrows – 26.00/20.80



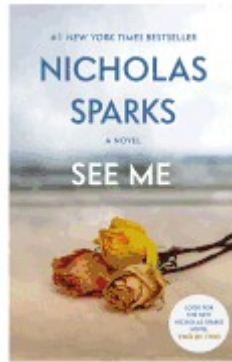
Ian McEwen – Nutshell – 25.95/20.80

China Mieville – The Last Days of New Paris – 25.00/20.00



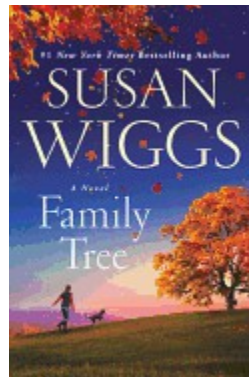
Linda Lael Miller – Always A Cowboy – 26.99/21.60

Nicholas Sparks – See Me – 15.99/12.00

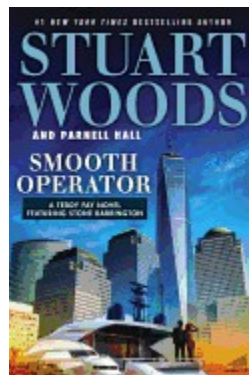


Charles Todd – The Shattered Tree – 25.99/20.80

Susan Wiggs – Family Tree – 25.99/20.80



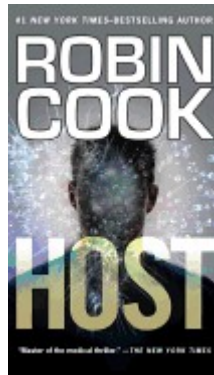
Stuart Woods – Smooth Operator – 28.00/22.40



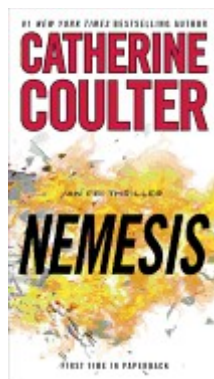
Paperback

Richard Castle – Driving Heat – 9.99/8.00

Robin Cook – Host – 9.99/8.00

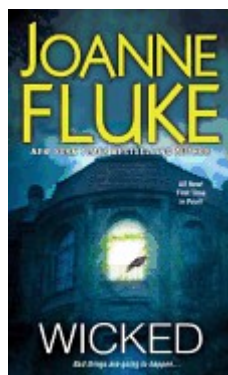


Catherine Coulter – Nemesis – 9.99/8.00



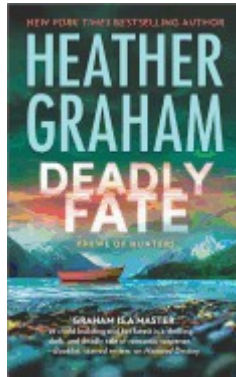
Clive Cussler – The Solomon Curse – 9.99/8.00

JoAnn Fluke – Wicked – 7.99/6.40



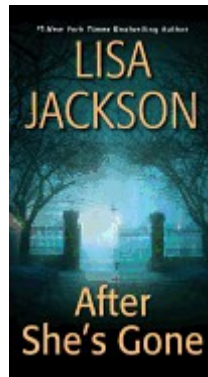
Sue Grafton – X – 9.99/8.00

Heather Graham – Deadly Fate – 7.99/6.40

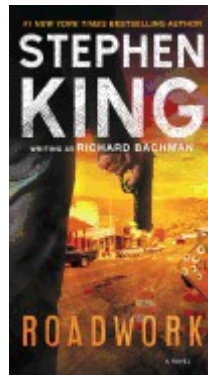


John Grisham – Rogue Lawyer – 9.99/8.00

Lisa Jackson – After She's Gone – 9.99/8.00



Stephen King – Roadwork – 9.99/8.00

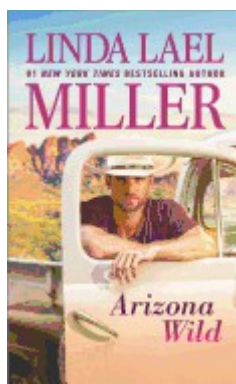


Jason Matthews – Palace

of Treason – 9.99/8.00

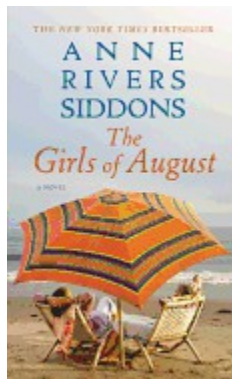
Linda Lael Miller – Arizona

Wild – 7.99/6.40



Carla Neggers – Keeper's Reach – 7.99/6.40

Anne Rivers Siddons –The Girls of August – 7.99/6.40



Wendy Corsi Staub – Blue Moon – 7.99/6.40

Tom Wood – A Time to Die – 9.99/8.00

Sherryl Woods – The Inn at Eagle Point - 7.99/6.40

