

The Book Rack Newsletter

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Vol 10, #5

May 2017

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Trivia for May

What is the first name of super-capitalist war profiteer "Daddy" Warbucks in the Little Orphan Annie cartoon series?

See below for the answer.

Did you know?

10 Classics originally rejected for publication:

Ulysses by James Joyce

Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austen

Lord of the Flies by William Golding

Catch-22 by Joseph Heller

Tess of the D'Urbervilles by Thomas Hardy

The Wind in the Willows by Kenneth Grahame

The Spy Who Came in From the Cold by John Le Carre'

The Rainbow by D.H. Lawrence

The War of the Worlds by H.G. Wells

Confederacy of Dunces by John Kennedy Toole

May Holidays and Events at The Book Rack:

May is -

- Date Your Mate Month
- National Police Week, Third week of the month
- 1 – Mother Goose Day
- 3 – World Press Freedom
- 4 – Star Wars Day
- 5 – Cinco de Mayo
- 13 – Sean Leary book signing 12-2:00
- 13 – Blame Someone Else Day – The first Friday the 13th of the year
- 14 – Mother's Day
- 20 – Armed Forces Day
- 20 – Sean Leary book signing 12-2:00
- 26 – Sally Ride Day
- 29 – Memorial Day

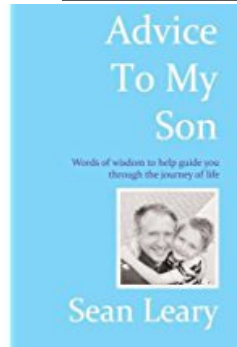
Featured Author: Sean Leary



Sean Leary has been a published author since the age of 10. An honors graduate of the University of Southern California masters program, he has written almost 30 books including the best-sellers *The Arimathean*, *Every Number is Lucky to Someone* and *We Are All Characters*.

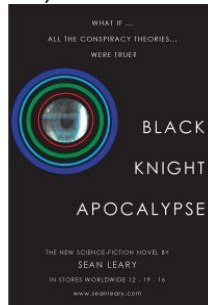
He's written and edited for local newspapers and national magazines, radio and TV, films and theater. Sean is also the owner of Sean Leary Literary Consulting. The Leary Literary Agency.

Two of Sean's most recent titles are Advice to My Son (2017)



All of the advice I wish my parents had given me, written in a fun, inspiring, engaging book for my son, Jackson, on the eve of his ninth birthday. A warm, funny, life-affirming tome for parents and children.

And, Black Knight Apocalypse! (2016)



2042. The Black Knight satellite, sent by an ancient alien race to keep the portals to demonic worlds sealed, is destroyed by the occult Nazi secret society The Thule, a cadre of demon-spawn Hitler clones. Soon, nothing will prevent the old gods, the Nephilim, from returning to earth, bringing about the apocalypse. The forces of evil, led by the mysterious and ruthless reptilian, The Babylonian, have been manipulating humanity for decades, through assassinations and wars, and now, they are on the brink of conquering and enslaving a computer-chipped humankind.

The Magi, the eternal guardians of the planet, have disappeared for almost two millenia. Only one remains to defend the world: The Arimathean. Only he, and his elite army of ninja wizards, the Sikari, are left to stand against the talons of darkness closing around the planet. But can they hope to stop them?

Will the Magi return? Will the forces of evil prevail? Can the Arimathean and his warriors survive against the most vicious and powerful foe mankind has ever faced? Find out, in **BLACK KNIGHT APOCALYPSE!**

Sean will be at The Book Rack 12-2:00 on May 7 & 20 to visit with you and share copies of his books.

Free Verse is a regular, monthly, feature by one of our wonderful Quad Cities area local authors. Our Free Verse Article for this month is:

FULL CIRCLE

An insider in the Rays' organization, this scout was there for Tampa Bay's 2008 World Series run-and his mother has a ring to show for it.

By **Jim Pransky**

In mid-October 2008, a World Series berth seemed a sure thing. The Rays had a 3-games-to 1 lead in the ALCS. But the next two games were excruciating, with the Red Sox evening the series. Finally, on October 19, Tampa Bay defeated Boston in Game 7 to win the AL pennant. The Rays were going to the Fall Classic!

It wasn't exactly a vacation, but it certainly was a welcome trip. More so, it was an excursion that could not be planned until just 36 hours before, and a voyage that seven months earlier seemed impossible.

I was a professional scout in my second year working for the club and my 17th in the Major Leagues. It was the first time that any organization I had worked for had advanced to baseball's biggest stage, although I had been part of playoff baseball five times before, with two different clubs.

I have known scouts who worked a lifetime in the game and never got close to a World Series. During Game 7 of the ALCS against Boston, I found myself restless and jittery every time the Red Sox swung the bat. When David Price retired Boston in the ninth to protect the Rays' slim, two-run lead, there was a tremendous sense

of pride at being a small part of such a remarkable achievement.

The day after the opening two games of the World Series at our home field, my wife and I had an early-afternoon flight back to our home in Iowa, with a layover in Atlanta. While waiting in the airport, I found an ESPN video on-line that caught my eye. When the club clinched its playoff spot in early October, I had read that Manager Joe Maddon was a big fan of early Bruce Springsteen albums. Joe mentioned that he particularly liked “The Wild, the Innocent and the E Street Shuffle,” an early Springsteen classic. As an avid music collector, I had several copies of it, so I sent him a framed copy with a short note congratulating him on the team’s success.

The video gave a virtual tour of Joe’s office, and hanging on the wall with other memorabilia was the Springsteen album. Joe made sure to point it out during the interview. My wife and I got a kick out of seeing it there, as just weeks before it was on display in our home.

A few days later, the Rays moved on to the World Series against Philadelphia, but they ultimately lost in five games. Several weeks after the final game, I received a letter from the front office thanking all of the staff members for making the 2008 season such a great campaign. The club also announced that in the spring, all the scouts would receive a World Series ring, a symbol of the team’s 2008 ALCS victory and World Series appearance.

My thoughts immediately turned to my mother and father. It was an undeclared dream that if I ever received a ring, I would give it to my dad, who always honored his young son’s request to hit “just five more” balls to him in the backyard and who would sit on the patio and listen to whatever game we could pick up on the radio that evening. Baseball played a tremendous part in our relationship right

up until his final days in January 2005.

Instead, my 91 year old mother, has the ring I received. It's been inscribed for the '08 AL championship season, but for me, it represents more-the family love and support I received ever since I was old enough to wear a glove. My mom shows the ring with pride whenever visitors call. I imagine most of the residents in Eldred, the small Pennsylvania town where I grew up have seen it at one time or another.

Author Jim Pransky is a professional baseball scout with the Colorado Rockies. Having just finished his 22nd year in scouting, his background also includes coaching in the minor leagues and operating his own instructional baseball school. Prior to entering professional sports, Jim worked as an elementary school teacher and coached both high school and college baseball. A native of Eldred, Pennsylvania, Jim lives in Davenport, Iowa with his wife, Grace, and their playful cat, Henry Aaron.

Book Reviews

Cold Courage by Pekka Hiltunen (2014)

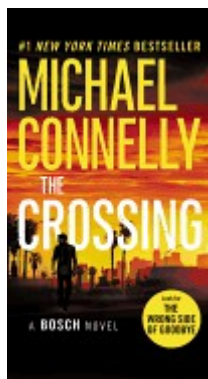


A gripping psychological thriller debut by award-winning Finnish author Pekka Hiltunen--skillfully paced, intense, and intelligent. When Lia witnesses a disturbing scene on her way to work, she, like the rest of the city of London, is captivated and horrified. As details unfurl in the media, the brutal truth emerges--

a Latvian prostitute has been killed, her body run over by a steamroller and then placed in the trunk of a car to be found. As the weeks pass and no leads are found, the news story dies, but Lia finds herself unable to forget. When she meets Mari, another Finn living in London, she thinks it fortuitous, but Mari has engineered the meeting for her own advantage. There is much more to Mari than meets the eye: she possesses an unnatural ability to "read" people, to see into their innermost thoughts and preempt their actions. Mari heads up a unit she calls the "Studio"--a group she employs made up of four disparate people: a hacker, a set designer, a private detective, and an actress. They are loyal to Mari, and she has bound them to her by granting them life-changing favors. When Lia shares the thoughts plaguing her about the murder, Mari thinks she and the members of the Studio can help where the police have failed. But Mari and Lia are about to set foot into extremely dangerous territory, especially as Mari is not above using the Studio to unscrupulous ends.

A very, very good debut novel. Mari & Lia are very different types, but once they meet and start working together, they, and the rest of the Studio cast art hard to beat. Good plot and very good execution by Hiltunen. I give it an A-. Hiltunen has since released a second book, Black Noise and you should look for it, as well.

The Crossing by Michael Connelly (2015)



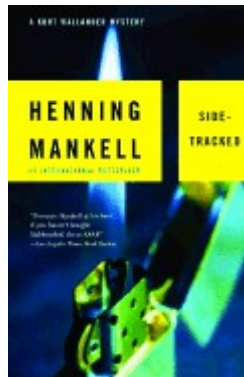
Harry Bosch crosses the line to team up with Lincoln Lawyer Mickey Haller in the new thriller from #1 "New York Times" bestselling author Michael Connelly. Detective Harry Bosch has retired from the LAPD, but his half-brother, defense attorney Mickey Haller, needs his help. A woman has been brutally murdered in her bed and all evidence points to Haller's client, a former gang member turned family man. Though the murder rap seems ironclad, Mickey is sure it's a setup. Bosch doesn't want anything to do with crossing the aisle to work for the defense. He feels it will undo all the good he's done in his thirty years as a homicide cop. But Mickey promises to let the chips fall where they may. If Harry proves that his client did it, under the rules of discovery, they are obliged to turn

over the evidence to the prosecution.

Though it goes against all his instincts, Bosch reluctantly takes the case. The prosecution's file just has too many holes and he has to find out for himself: if Haller's client didn't do it, then who did? With the secret help of his former LAPD partner Lucy Soto, Harry starts digging. Soon his investigation leads him inside the police department, where he realizes that the killer he's been tracking has also been tracking him.

It's been quite a while since I last read a Michael Connelly book, but having finished *The Crossing* I'm reminded that I should not wait so long the next time. Whether it's Harry Bosch or Mickey Haller (in this book – both) Connelly is a master of his craft. *The Crossing* is a great police procedural and courtroom drama story rolled into one seamless tale that I thoroughly enjoyed. I give it a B+ +. If you like Harlan Coben, James Lee Burke or Lee Child and haven't found Connelly, by all means add him to your favorites.

Sidetracked by Henning Mankell (1995)



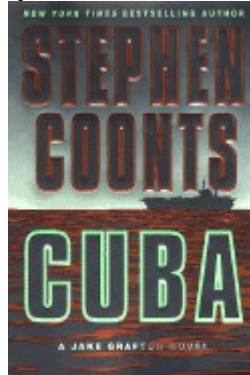
From the dean of Scandinavian noir, the fourth riveting installment in the internationally bestselling and universally acclaimed Kurt Wallander series, the basis for the PBS series starring Kenneth Branagh.

In the award-winning *Sidetracked*, Kurt Wallander is called to a nearby rapeseed field where a teenage girl has been loitering all day long. He arrives just in time to watch her douse herself in gasoline and set herself aflame. The next day he is called to a beach where Sweden's former Minister of Justice has been axed to death and scalped. The murder has the obvious markings of a demented serial killer, and Wallander is frantic to find him before he strikes again. But his investigation is beset with a handful of obstacles: a department distracted by the threat of impending cutbacks and the frivolity of World Cup soccer, a tenuous long-distance relationship with a murdered policeman's widow, and the unshakably haunting preoccupation with the young girl who set herself on fire. Fascinating and astute, *Sidetracked* is a compelling mystery enhanced by keen social awareness.

Another terrific Mankell crime mystery! He was awarded the 2001 Crime Writers Gold Dagger Award for *Sidetracked*, and justifiably so, in my judgment. I give it

an A- and strong recommendation. If you like crime novels with lots of complex police work, get Mankell. While it's set in Sweden, you soon realize it makes very little difference. It's just a really good book!

Cuba by Stephen Coonts (2000)

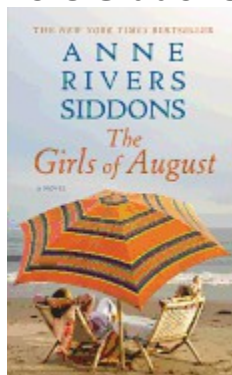


Stephen Coonts' best selling novels takes readers into the heart of harrowing, pulse-pounding action, whether on land, on sea, or in the air. Now, this master of full-tilt, blockbuster suspense turns into a lush setting 90 miles from U.S. soil. In Cuba, Fidel Castro lies dying. Human sharks are circling. And one man has his finger on the trigger of a weapon that will change everything...

Admiral Jake Grafton is overseeing a shipment of nerve gas being transferred for a top-secret U.S. stockpile at Guantanamo Bay. But a power struggle inside Cuba has ignited an explosive plot and turned a horrific new weapon on the U.S. Now, Jake must strap himself into the cockpit of a new generation of American aircraft and fly blind into the heart of an island that is about to blow--and take the whole world with it...

As always, Coonts' tale is full of memorable characters, such as Hector Sedano, the priest who believes Cuba is on the verge of greatness; his sister-in-law Mercedes Sedano, a patriot who risks everything for her country; younger brother El Ocho, the fiery youth who will build a Cuban future; and Carlos Corrado, a drunken fighter pilot who finally finds something worth fighting for. More than enough excitement and conflict to sate the appetite of any lover of thrillers. If you like Patrick Robinson, W.E.B. Griffin or Steve Perry, you'll like Coonts. I give it a B.

The Girls of August by Anne Rivers Siddons (2014)



Every August, four women would gather together to spend a week at the beach, renting a new house each year. The ritual began when they were in their twenties and their husbands were in medical school, and became a mainstay of every summer thereafter. Their only criteria was oceanfront and isolation, their only desire to strengthen their far-flung friendships. They called themselves the Girls of August. But when one of the Girls dies tragically, the group slowly drifts apart and their vacations together are brought to a halt. Years later, a new marriage reunites them and they decide to come together once again on a remote barrier island off the South Carolina coast. There, far from civilization, the women make startling discoveries that will change them in ways they never expected. *The Girls of August* is a poignant depiction of female friendship as well as a compelling exploration of the deep, complex bonds that tie people together – and tear them apart.

This was one of my “testing my limits” books to see if I would enjoy an author much different than my normal fare. And... I did enjoy it! Reviews on Goodreads are mostly disappointing, so be warned. Some of the good and bad comments:

“Why did I like *The Girls of August*? I liked it because it is a novel that is true to what happens when women reach middle age. In my opinion, it was not meant to be anything else

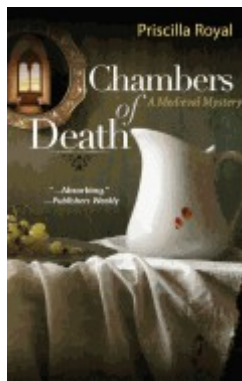
Have you ever read a book that you know you've not read before, but when you finish it, it felt like you had, because the plot was so similar to about a dozen other books that you've read?

I only wish it had been twice as long - it definitely feels like there still more stories to tell about the Girls of August

The Girls of August by Anne River Siddons should probably be titled *The Mean Girls of August*. It is a rushed, relatively undeveloped story that goes something like this. Mean girls (who are really middle aged women) unite against the new girl. New girl perseveres. Repeat.

I give it a B-.

Chambers of Death by Priscilla Royal (2009)



Priscilla Royal understands the human heart, the medieval mind, and how to ratchet up the suspense with each turn of the page." -Sharon Kay Penman, NY Times bestselling author
When one of her company falls ill on a return journey to Tyndal, Prioress Eleanor accepts lodging at a nearby manor. The hospitality may be warm, but the underlying passions among the steward's family are scorching. Master Stevyn's wife is having an affair with the groom while a local widow acts more like the lady of the manor than the lady herself. Stevyn's eldest son and spouse are obsessed with sin and heaven, while his youngest son, bound for the Church, unexpectedly returns with more interest in lute playing than the priesthood. So it is no surprise when someone's throat is cut. But the sheriff does all he can to avoid offending the family rather than seek the real killer. As strangers in this place, Eleanor and Thomas know nothing about motives or past history, yet God's justice demands that they do what they can before another innocent person dies...

Chambers of Death is the sixth in a series of Prioress Eleanor mysteries by Royal. I found it a bit dry for my liking, but, if you like medieval settings for your mysteries, this would be one to explore. Its bibliography indicates the author did her research and the settings and customs of the characters likely represent fairly accurate pictures of actual manor life. The mystery is interesting, but seemed at times almost secondary. I give the book a B.

Trivia for May

What is the first name of supercapitalist war profiteer "Daddy" Warbucks in the Little Orphan Annie cartoon series?

Answer: Oliver

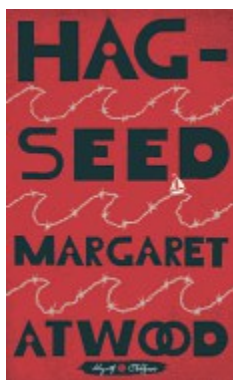
Upcoming New Releases:

Check out the prices following the title of the book. Those prices are the publisher's prices. The **The Book Rack** price is normally 20% lower. When you pick it up at the store there is no shipping cost, though we can also ship it to you. Order now by calling the store 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.

Hardcover and Trade Paperback

Margaret Atwood – Hag-Seed – 15.00



Robyn Carr – Any Day Now – 26.99

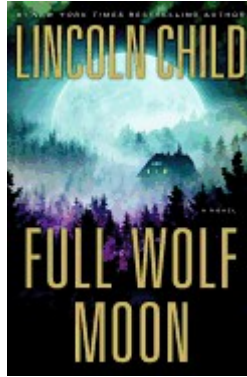
Tracy Chevalier – New Boy – 25.00



Lee Child – No Middle Name – 27.00

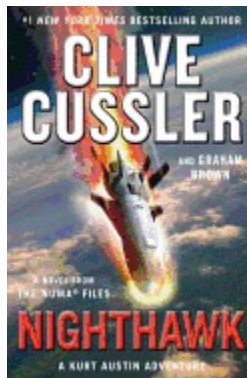
A thrilling new novella and 11 previously published stories in one pulse-pounding Jack Reacher experience

Lincoln Child – Full Wolf Moon – 26.95



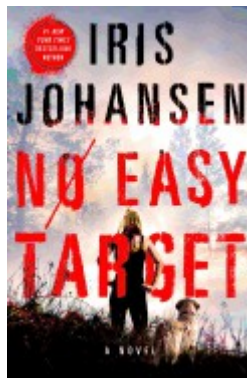
Michael Crichton – Dragon Teeth – 28.99

Clive Cussler – Nighthawk – 29.00



Heather Graham – Dying Breath – 28.99

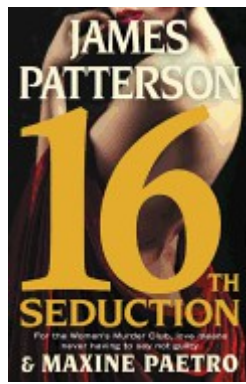
Iris Johansen – No Easy Target – 27.99



Ian McEwan – Nutshell – 16.00

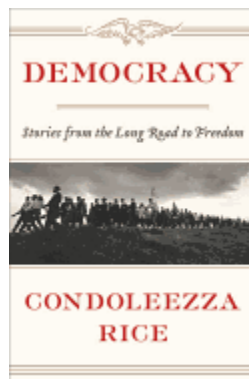
Jo Nesbo – The Thirst – 26.95

James Patterson - 16th Seduction – 29.00



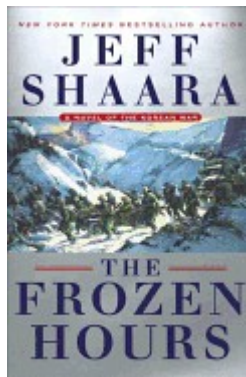
Matthew Reilly – The Four Legendary Kingdoms – 26.00

Condoleezza Rice – Democracy – 35.00



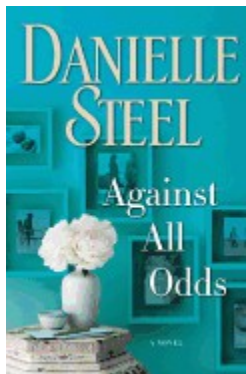
Lisa Scottoline – One Perfect Lie – 27.99

Jeff Shaara – The Frozen Hours – 28.99



Anita Shreve – The Stars are Fire – 25.95

Danielle Steel – Against All Odds – 28.99



Scott Turow – Testimony – 28.00

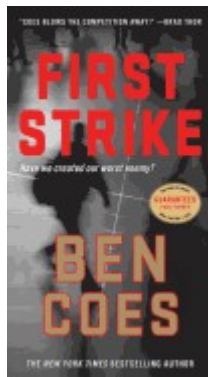
Paperback

Grant Blackwood - Tom Clancy's Duty and Honor – 9.99



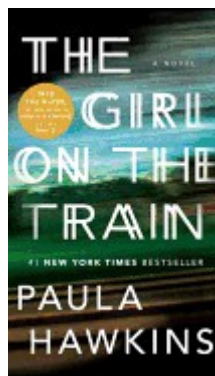
Mary Higgins Clark – As Time Goes By – 7.99

Ben Coes – First Strike – 9.99



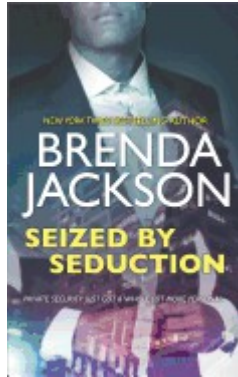
Clive Cussler – The Emperor's Revenge – 9.99

Paula Hawkins – The Girl on the Train – 9.99



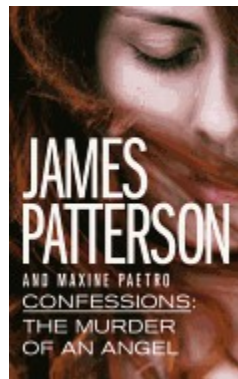
Tami Hoag – The Bitter Season – 9.99

Brenda Jackson – Seized by Seduction – 7.99



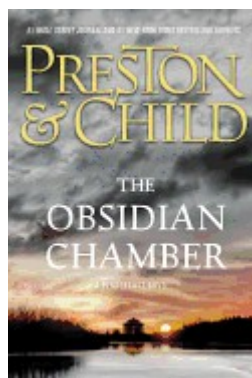
Jeffrey Layton – The Forever Spy – 9.99

James Patterson – Confessions: The Murder of an Angel – 7.99



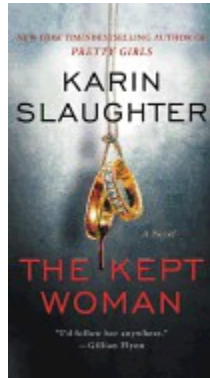
Louise Penny – A Great Reckoning – 9.99

Preston & Child – The Obsidian Chamber – 9.99



Nora Roberts – Blood Magick – 7.99

Karin Slaughter – The Kept Woman – 9.99



Sherryl Woods – Along Came Trouble – 7.99

Stuart Woods – Smooth Operator – 9.99

