

10 Great Books to Read

Selected Book Reviews

by Liana Metal

Book Reviewer

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A Review of Sibley's Birding Basics by David Allen Sibley

Topic

Do you need a bird guide that is completely different from existing guidebooks? Sibley's Birding Basics contains far more information than any other field guide, relies much more on illustrations, and shows more plumages, more subspecies, and many more birds in flight than any previous book, all of these condensed into a portable size. This information is also accessible to any reader. So, if you would like to know all about birds and bird watching, read this great little book which is also an art book in itself!

Reviewed by Liana Metal

SIBLEY'S BIRDING BASICS

By David Allen Sibley

**Alfred A. Knopf, Publisher of Borzoi Books, a Division of Random House, Inc.,
299 Park Avenue, New York 10171, www.aaknopf.com, 2002**

ISBN 0-375-70966-5, 160 pp, USA \$ 15.95, CAN \$ 23.95

Very Highly Recommended

David Allen Sibley, artist, naturalist, and birder has published two more books related to birds that have become bestsellers. The son of Yale ornithologist, Fred Sibley, he was born in New York and has been watching and drawing birds since he was seven years old. His illustrations have appeared in many publications, from newsletters to national magazines such as Bird Watcher's Digest, Birding, The Nature Conservancy, and Audubon.

More of Mr. Sibley's artwork can be seen on his web site, www.sibleyart.com
He lives in Concord, Massachusetts with his wife and their two sons.

SIBLEY'S BIRDING BASICS is a pocket-sized book, the first easily portable guide to all the skills you need to identify a bird in the few moments it's in your view! In this book, David is concerned with the general characteristics that influence the appearance of all birds and give us clues to their identity. It includes 125 full-color illustrations and is specially designed for use in the field.

The book is divided into 16 chapters. At the *Introduction*, the author explains what exactly bird-watching is and where it can be done.

'This book is about interpreting what you see and hear in order to make better judgments,' David says. 'This is not a guide to the identification of any specific birds. It is designed to promote a general understanding of the challenges of identification, and an understanding of how our impressions of the birds are shaped by the environment and the birds' behavior.'

In the first chapter, *Getting Started*, the author says:

‘ Whether you can identify six birds or six hundred, you’ll be a better birder if you have a grounding in the real nuts and bolts of what birds look like, and your skills will be even sharper if you know exactly what to look for and how to record what you see.’

He writes about the equipment necessary, where and when to go birding and a lot of other useful information:

‘Browsing technical journals can provide insights and bits of information that will help you to understand the birds and their identification.’

Finding Birds is the second chapter , where David gives the readers useful tips and advice:

‘ Of course, it is not essential to go out into the woods and marshes and stalk birds. By providing food, water , and cover, you can bring many species of birds into your yard, where they can be studied at close range and watched at leisure.’

Keeping Records, Field Notes and Sketching are all valuable subchapters to read.

The Challenges of Bird Identification comes next, dealing with the development of birding skills and its benefits.

‘For the birder, one of the practical benefits of studying birds more closely is that the more precisely you define each species, the more accurate your identification will be,’ the author says. *Sorting Skills and Birds’ Differences* lead to the right identification.

The next chapter is about *Misidentification*. Here the author tries to sort out the problems of poor or brief bird observation.

‘ Unfortunately, it is easy to bias your own observations through a sloppy or casual approach,’ David says. *Identifying Rare Birds, Taxonomy, and Using Behavioral Clues* follow, offering more details:

‘ Birds are often seen in flight, and you can learn to identify flying birds, but to do so you must know “the Basics”. Plumage patterns and bill shape can be seen in surprising detail on flying birds, as can leg length,’ the author says.

The Voice comes next, and it’s very interesting to learn all about it:

‘ Listen to the overall pitch and to changes in pitch, noting whether the song varies widely from high to low pitch or is more even...,’ David goes on , explaining in simple graphs the song of several species.

The following chapter is about *Understanding Feathers*. The author’s sketches enlighten the description of several species. In the *Feather Groups of a Passerine* pages , David displays a detailed description of the bird supported by his fine drawings , and labeling of feathers. David’s sketches fill up the next pages and are explained in meticulous detail.

Feather Arrangement and Color Patterns, *Structure of Tail and Wings and Bare Parts* follow, while in chapter thirteen, *Molt*, the author explains everything about the process by which birds replace their feathers. More colorful sketches appear in this section, while moving to the 14th chapter, *Feather Wear*, the readers get informed about the wear of feathers and the changes in plumage throughout the year.

Age Variation follows, with more details on how to determine the age of a bird:

‘You can see how the progress of molt leaves clues that allow a birder to determine the age of a hawk. A complete set of juvenal feathers indicates a bird in its first year of life,’ David says.

In the last chapter, *Ethics and Conservation*, David Sibley motivates the readers to support habitat preservation work locally. ‘Your support of local, national, and international conservation organizations is also important,’ he says. He also displays some addresses related to conservancy, as well as their URLs.

The book ends with a list of *Latin Names for Species Mentioned in the Text*, and a note about the author.

SIBLEY’S BIRDING BASICS is a well-organized pocket-guide book, clearly laid-out, scientifically precise and beautifully illustrated.

It caters for everyone, not just the ones who take up Birding as a hobby. It is highly educational and children can equally enjoy it and benefit from it, as well as adults.

‘I wrote and illustrated this book to help every inquisitive birder, from novice to expert,’ the author says.

The sketches throughout the book are not only helpful but show the author’s exceptional talent in fine arts, too. It is worth having this book, not only for the interesting information on birds, but also for keeping it on your bookshelf as an art book.

David Allen Sibley is available for interviews. He is willing to lead you on a walk, show you his painting technique, or simply whistle. Please contact us if you are interested.

Kathryn Zuckerman Kzuckerman@randomhouse.com
Allison McGeehon ammcgeehon@randomhouse.com

Related Titles

By David Allen Sibley:

The Sibley Guide to Birds, 2000
The Sibley Guide to Bird Life and Behavior, 2001

A review of Telmenu Saimnieks by Guntis Goncarovs

Topic

An epic love story set in Latvia during World War One. The hero, despite his father's expectations to be the future Lord of Telmeni, chooses to be an officer in the Czarist cavalry and then a hero. However, his life's constant changes perplex him and his extraordinary experiences make him eventually find what he was looking for .

Reviewed by Liana Metal

TELMENU SAIMNIEKS

By Guntis Goncarovs

Writer's Showcase Press, iuniverse , Inc., 5220 S. 16th St., Suite 200, Lincoln, NE 68512, www.iuniverse.com ,2002, paperback, ISBN 0-595-22448-2

U.S. \$ 21.95 , CAN \$ 35.95, UK £ 18.99, 431 pp, *Highly Recommended*

Guntis Goncarovs , educated in chemistry, enjoys plotting out his ancestral lineage in his first novel in a planned series of three about Telmeni and her family. The author has studied Latvia and family history for over twenty years and he presently lives with his family in N.Carolina.

The story unfolds at the brink of World War 1, in 1912, at Riga, in Russian controlled Latvia. Captain Voldemars Vechi, the hero of the story, is a young officer who is in love with Otilija , a beautiful bookkeeper who eventually is strong minded enough to turn down his proposal for a prompt wedding. The hero, due to his duties at the Czarist cavalry, is leaving urgently while the Great World War sparks to life. Voldemars will be home in six months. Will Otilija be waiting for him? 'I can survive six months, he thought, closing his eyes,' the author writes.

Voldemars fights in the front but soon retreats home seriously injured. His life is a constant battle among his country, his heart and heritage, Latvia and Telmeni. His struggle between his loyalty to the Czar, his own country's rise for independence, his father's desire for his future, and the welfare of his wife and daughter make Voldemars feeling perplexed. What is he finally going to choose? What is his destiny? Will he ever find peace of mind and happiness?

TELMENU SAIMNIEKS is a grand love story that involves strong characters' action set in a historical background . It is also a family saga in a wartime setting which could be still happening today. The first chapter is fast-paced, as the rest of the story is, and captivating, introducing the reader to the heroes of the novel. Vivid dialogue in every scene makes this book easy and highly enjoyable to read as well.

Guntis Goncarovs touches our hearts from the very first pages of the book, so that the reader cannot put the novel down. Rich in emotions and detailed description TELMENU SAIMNIEKS is an excellent historical novel that involves alternate feelings of love and tragedy, friendship and hatred. Highly emotional pieces can be found everywhere in this story. Otilija giving birth, and Voldemars' horse dying in the battle field are only two of the lot. Some other parts emit strong barbarism and cruelty :

‘ At the third carcass ,two men hunched over the still steaming flanks , hacking at the meat with bloody knives, ripping out chunks with bare, dripping hands.’

The author expresses his beliefs on several aspects such as the concept of deceit: ‘You can’t be perfect! What you did was a simple error in judgement. A completely understandable error. Don’t you think you should allow yourself a mistake now and then?’

In another part he speaks about Atheism: ‘ After all the pushing my father did, making me go to church and bare my soul ,I vowed I would never go back. But there I was! Just like I was a little boy again, twenty years ago, head bowed, hands folded, ...I don’t even remember why I went there.’

The novel also includes political views : ‘ ...I remember how you Russians brutalized thousands of us in the name of that damned Czar of yours! ...How the blood filled the streets! That will never fade in my mind or any Armenian’s mind.’

TELMENU SAIMNIEKS is a novel that has got all the elements of a best seller, that is to say, it involves love, war, conspiracy, friendship and evil, all in a proportional combination to the very end of the story where the hero finds inner peace. It is a journey of the soul through challenging situations to the ultimate transformation .

The plot is absorbing and the writing style is simple. Being a historical novel, it also contains segments of history, customs and culture of the Russians, Cossacks and the Latvians . The reader thinks he is actually there, experiencing every single fraction of action the characters perform. Native words are used adding a tint of regional culture and flavor, a certain plus to the story.

This book is a highly enjoyable novel that caters for both fiction lovers and for all of those who like historical novels .

The book cover is an actual photo of the farmhouse and land and Telmeni is the name of the farmland which had been passed down through the generations of the Vechi/Krebs family.

For more information about Latvia, Saimnieks and Goncarovs, visit www.angelfire.com/ri2/telmeni

Here you can read the author’s bio, browse the historical preface and chapter one of the book, sign the guest book , and even provide your own comments. You can contact the author at Lacplexis@aol.com

Related Titles

Captain Corelli’s Mandolin by Louis de Bernieres

A review of Irrepressible Appetites by Tracey Broussard

Topic

Would you like to read something uniquely appetizing? This anthology features 36 contributors whose inspirational works show the readers how food influences and shapes our lives. It is a contemporary collection of food-related cultural pieces that will feed both your body and spirit.

Reviewed by Liana Metal

IRREPRESSIBLE APPETITES

By Tracey Broussard

Rock Press, Inc., 4611 South University Drive #450, Davie, FL 33328, www.rockpress.com, 2003, ISBN : 0-967 6748-2-4 , paperback, 240 pp. , USA \$19.95, Highly Recommended

The editor of this unusual anthology, Tracey Broussard, is a former caterer, has written for various periodicals and is completing her MFA in Creative Writing at Florida International University.

IRREPRESIIBLE APPETITES is a quite extraordinary anthology of food-related essays, stories ,poems and recipes that will feed the reader's body and spirit.

The book is divided into five parts, each one consisting of a variety of cultural works . The first part is dedicated to *Restaurants*. Poems, excerpts from novels, stories and delicious recipes such as Tiramisu, are all fun to read and try!

‘Tiramisu’

‘ Literally translates to “a –pick- me-up.” (I should say ,it’s a zillion and a half calories!) This recipe serves six.’

The second part, *On the Hunt*, deals with shopping the right ingredients:

‘ Shopping at Publix, Late October’

‘ Smell of fish polluting apples, the old produce guy to the young one: Someone cut your hair with a bowl? Aisle of mothballs, disposable roasting pans .I imagine Thanksgiving , call Mom for advice on gizzards and dressing.’

Love and Hunger, is the third part , where Lorenzo’s Homemade Pepperoni – Mozzarella Bread is absolutely mouthwatering.

Here the readers will have the chance to read short essays and stories as well:

‘ California Honeymoon , Day 1

We landed in Los Angeles on Christmas Eve and ate dinner in McDonald's near LAX, where a homeless black man wearing shredded blue jeans and an Oakland Athletics sweatshirt sat with his newspaper and empty coffee cup. ...'

What You Are comes next, packed with more delicious recipes such as Minestrone , and various poems :

' Asparagus'

' Asparagus grow from the brown beards of their mothers
every crown lush with promises.
Wet warm ready,
They sprout into fleshy shoots
That ripen and rush into blooming.'

Family Meals follows and ends up with a poem:

' Everything'

'My father buys bananas
and seedless grapes , piles up
pears and apples in the fruit...'

At the end of the book ,there are Notes on the contributors, an Index of Contributors, and an Index of Recipes for easy reference.

IRREPRESSIBLE APPETITES is an innovative book that will satisfy the inner needs of the readers for culture related with food. It is by all means a very original anthology that is entertaining as well as educational . It caters to everybody who wants a good read filled with recipes . This book is a cultural piece of art in itself, not a cookbook, but it can serve both purposes as well.

Related Titles

Recipe Hall of Fame Quick and Easy Cookbook , www.quailridge.com

Best of the Best from Oregon Cookbook

Best of the Best from West Virginia Cookbook

Liana Metal

<http://lianametal.tripod.com>

A review of Writing Poems by Peter Sansom

Topic

Feeling you need a poetry workshop? Then this book is for you! A step by step mini practice guide , illustrated with many examples to make you understand everything involved in poetry writing. Writing Poems is a wonder workshop itself, analyzing poems, displaying writing techniques and procedures and helping you learn discrimination in your reading and writing. Submitting to magazines is just one of the many areas this guide covers.

Reviewed by Liana Metal

WRITING POEMS

By Peter Sansom

Bloodaxe Books Ltd, P.O. Box 1SN, Newcastle Upon Tyne NE99 1SN,1994, paperback, ISBN 1-85224-204-3, UK £ 7.95, 128 pp, Very Highly Recommended

Peter Sansom, one of the best contemporary poets, has extensive experience of poetry workshops and courses and has held several placements in schools and colleges. He was also writer-in-residence at Doncaster Central library for three years and he is a director of The Poetry Business in Huddersfield and co-editor of The North Magazine and Smith/Doorstop Books and Cassettes.

WRITING POEMS is a ‘little book that does not tell you what or how to write, but helps you say genuinely what you genuinely need to say,’ the writer says at the introduction of the book.

The book includes ten sections:

Section one deals with Poetry and the Marketplace, Submitting Poems to Magazines and other interesting topics.

Section two analyzes a poem . There the reader will learn the basics about meter , rhyme and free verse. The Spirit of the Age comes in section three, offering the reader a range of literary fashions , while, section four, Almost a Remembrance, displays practical hints on how to create the vivid detail poems need by comparing and contrasting various poems.

“ There is plenty to be said about the poems , but I want to draw your attention to their endings,” the writer says. “It is tempting to finish a

poem with a flourish , but the bigger the ending the more it has to have been *earned* by what precedes it.”

Section five ,Writing Poems, focuses on more detailed elements , such as punctuation, drafting ,the disaster poem and many other. “ I think free verse looks odd with capitals heading the lines,” the writer advises.

Workshop techniques and writing games are included in section six. An extremely interesting section showing the readers how to enhance their writing and give them the motive to keep on writing. Packed with topics and questions to help the new writer create is easy to follow and fun as well:

“ FREE WRITING (also called hot-penning). Use as a warm-up and as an exercise in itself. There are three rules:

1. Once you’ve started you must not stop writing.
2. You must not think. Let the writing go its own way...
3. You must not rhyme.”

A detailed approach of meter, rhyme , half-rhyme and free verse is in

WRITING POEMS caters for new writers, poetry reviewers, as well as all readers who wish to educate themselves in poetry related areas. It is an excellent ,informative book that no one should miss.

Related Titles

By the same author:

On the Pennine Way, 1988

Everything You've Heard is True, 1990

January, 1994

Getting into Poetry by Paul Hyland

About the Reviewer: Liana Metal is a teacher, artist , reviewer and writer based in Europe. Visit her web site and become a contributor!

<http://lianametal.tripod.com>

Contact her at : liamet900@hotmail.com

A review of Nudges from God
By Vanessa K. Mullins

Topic

Are you paying attention to God 's little nudges in your life?

This book will make you become aware of the everyday little miracles through which God is guiding and directing us toward the destiny He has planned for us. Filled with stories of inspiration from everyday people, whose lives have been touched by God, this book will touch your heart and soul in a very special way.

Reviewed by Liana Metal

NUDGES FROM GOD –an Anthology of Inspiration

Compiled by Vanessa K.Mullins

Obadiah Press ,607 N.Cleveland St., Merrill,WI 54452, www.obadiahpress.com

2003, paperback, ISBN: 0-9713266-7-3, 288 pp, US \$ 15.95

Very Highly Recommended

Vanessa K.Mullins, a wife, a mother, and a writer, lives in Michigan with her husband and three children. She has completed two novels and is currently working on another . This book is the first anthology she has compiled. Read the book and email her with your thoughts /comments at: ykmullins@comcast.net

NUDGES FROM GOD is an amazing book of inspiration and miracles. Reading these stories from everyday life , the readers will have the opportunity to discover the power of God in their life via the little miracles that happen every day. The writers' lives have been touched in unique ways by God, and having been aware of this magic touch, they forward their experiences to all the readers to help them discover their own 'nudges from God' in their daily life.

The book is divided into eight parts, starting with 'The Lord Always Provides', where the readers can realize that everybody can get help from God, one way or another. The readers can also get to know how Obadiah Press got started- a very interesting story- and flourished.

There are many more interesting stories to read in the 'Coming to Believe' and 'Do Unto Others' sections. It is worth mentioning the story "Forget me Knots", in part four, where the readers can get to know how the above series of anthologies sprouted and spread around. This is a great story to inspire those who feel that they are not able to pursue their goals. The readers will learn that with the help of God they can certainly fulfil their wishes.

'Are You Listening to Him' and 'Angels Among Us' include more inspiring stories in a variety of situations. "Anne's Song" is one of the stories that the readers can identify easily with the characters and situations mentioned , while, "A Gentle

Nudge” , in part seven, is a story to remember not a story of coincidences as some people might say, but a story about God and how He guided the writer to Him.

‘When Love Calls’ is the last story of part eight , and the book. It serves as the epilogue of this wonderful collection of stories that will warm the readers’ heart and feelings and drive them toward God. Reading this last , amazing story of God’s nudge, the readers will not fail to realize how important it is, to believe in love and God. After all, God is love.

At the end of the book there is a section with the Contributors’ bios , which the readers can use to get to know the writers of these wonderful stories and may contact them if they wish.

NUDGES FROM GOD is a fine anthology that no one should miss. It is interesting to read, not only as a life story account, but as an inspirational means of getting guided to God. It caters to a wide audience to those who would like to have an enjoyable good read , and to those who yearn to discover how to find God in their life.

It is amazing how the writers of these stories have discovered God’s power and how they have listened to Him in every different situation. The stories in this book will certainly make the readers think about their own life , evaluate their priorities in life, and , why not, decide to let God direct them toward their destiny.

Related Titles

Forget me Knots...from the front porch by Helen Kay Polaski

When a Woman Prays by Tina L. Miller

Liana Metal

<http://lianametal.tripod.com>

<http://eschool2003.tripod.com>

A review of the Recipe Hall of Fame Quick and Easy Cookbook

Topic

If you like cooking but you just don't have enough time to prepare a tasty meal, then this great cookbook is for you! Packed with fast, flavorful recipes it is ideal for people on the Go. So, you don't have to spend all your time in the kitchen! It takes only fifteen minutes or less to have dinner in the oven. Why not try it today?

Reviewed by Liana Metal

RECIPE HALL OF FAME

QUICK AND EASY COOKBOOK

Winning Recipes from Hometown America

By Gwen Mckee and Barbara Moseley

Quail Ridge Press, P.O. Box 123 ,Brandon, MS 39043, 1-800-343-1583, Local 601-825-2063, Fax 1800-864-1082,email info@quailridge.com, URL www.quailridge.com

Paperback, ISBN 1-893062-26-0, 2001, USA \$ 19.95, 304 pp

Very Highly Recommended

Editors, Gwen Mckee and Barbara Moseley are eager to help a new generation of cooks feel comfortable in the kitchen , as well as preserve America's food heritage.

Gwen, known as 'The Cookbook Lady', and her good friend Barbara who was raised on a dairy farm, love to cook and have families that love to eat. The two have been traveling the Country gathering the best cookbooks from each state for almost 20 years , thus creating a series of 35 books with 43 states represented and more cookbooks currently in production.

'THE RECIPE HALL OF FAME QUICK AND EASY COOKBOOK shows people that food can be fast and simple and still be good. They don't have to stay in the kitchen for hours with long lists of ingredients for delicious, home-cooked meals or distinctive, impressive party food,' Mckee said.

Quail Ridge Press' the Recipe Hall of Fame Quick and Easy Cookbook , sold over 100,000 copies on QVC in advance of publication and features over 500 recipes from hometown America that any cook can prepare in a snap. The company has published over 100 books, with only a handful currently out of print, and it has come a long way from the Mckee's dining room table.

' We started out as a very small company that published primarily cookbooks, then a few regional titles,' said Gwen , ' but now we are branching out everywhere.'

THE RECIPE HALL OF FAME QUICK AND EASY COOKBOOK is the third edition in the best-selling Recipe Hall of Fame Cookbook Collection, containing over 500 recipes carefully selected from a database of over 12,000 recipes in the acclaimed Quail Ridge Press BEST OF THE BEST STATE COOKBOOK series. This

innovative cookbook is designed to deliver reliable, flavorful family favorites in short order, thus it is ideal for everyday meals as well as special occasions.

The book is divided into fourteen sections, covering all cooking needs. The Preface is brief but quite informative, enhanced by the editors' comments and their own pictures taken during their long traveling food –research adventures around USA.

‘ In our years of research, we have traveled throughout America learning about its people and what they most enjoy cooking and eating,’ the editors say. ‘ We invite you to travel around the country with us, by way of the chapter opening photographs, to some of the places we have visited.’

‘ We hope the Recipe Hall of Fame Quick and Easy Cookbook will help you solve that dilemma of modern –day life, “ How can I get delicious food on the table in the least amount of time?”’

Beverages and Appetizers come first. Who can resist the mouthwatering Chocolate Chip Cheese Ball recipe or the simple, yet, tasty Vegetable Pizza?

In *Bread and Breakfast* that follows, Peach Coffee Cake and Cottage Pancakes will keep you deliciously satisfied, while, in the *Soups* section, Chicken Tortilla Soup will surprise you.

Salads offer low-fat variety and color: Rice Salad is filling, while Orange Delight Quick Salad is cool and light.

The *Vegetables* section's Laredo Potato recipe is a low-fat, energizing choice, while Parmesan Fries and Party Potatoes are just irresistible! *Pasta, Rice, Etc* deals with versatile and filling meals full of flavor, while *Poultry* will satisfy the most demanding chicken eater. Every single recipe is sensational!

Seafood comes next, and is a pleasant alternative to meat eating. It is difficult to choose among the Hot Shrimp meal Elly's Shrimp Spaghetti, and the Lemon-garlic Broiled Shrimp – you just have to taste all of them.

The *Meats* chapter ranges from beef to ham and pork chops, all deliciously prepared and fully flavored. In the *Cakes* section do not miss the Apricot Rum Cake or the Fruit Cocktail Cake for a more fruity taste. The Ice cream Cake is a cool surprise and if you love chocolate, try the Cherry Chocolate Cake. If you love cookies, then the *Cookies and Candies* section is for you. Brown Edge Cookies, Cornflake Cookies, No Bake Cookies, Lemon Squares are only a few of the impressive lot in the book. Learn how to make your own candies, such as the Easy Candy and the Microwave Pralines.

Pies and other Desserts offer the reader a variety of pies that are all worth trying. Buttermilk Pie and Mini apple Pies are deliciously surprising while, Pineapple Pudding and Baked Bananas are a must!

The book ends with a List of Contributors, an Extra Help section and an Index.

THE RECIPE HALL OF FAME QUICK AND EASY COOKBOOK is a highly informative and entertaining cookbook that has short and concise instructions, clearly written and easy to be followed by any age group cooks. Packed with family-friendly recipes for today's busy lifestyle, it also includes time-saving tips for delicious meals in less time. It caters for everyone, experienced or inexperienced cooks- everyone needs quick and easy recipes.

It is originally illustrated and offers the readers tidbits of information about the food and people of America , thus, this book is great for those who read cookbooks like novels. Moreover, this cookbook is applicable outside of the USA and this fact makes it an international bestseller. It is worth reading every single recipe of it!

RECIPE HALL OF FAME QUICK AND EASY COOKBOOK is available at book stores, gift shops, online at www.quailridge.com
Or by calling 1-800-343-1583. For more information contact Jimmie Saucier at jsaucier@quailridge.com

Related Titles

By Quail Ridge Press:

Best of the Best from Oregon Cookbook, ISBN 1-893062-34-1

Best of the Best from Washington Cookbook , ISBN 1-893062-35-x

Best of the Best from West Virginia Cookbook , ISBN 1-893062-36-8

A review of Silver Creek by A.H.Holt

Topic

Silver Creek is a novel of the old west in its full glory . It is packed with cowboys, gunfights, treachery, loyalty and love, traveling the reader through the Arizona Mountains to Silver Creek. An old fashioned western that will fascinate everybody with its fast moving plot. The readers won't resist turning the pages till the very end of the story.

Reviewed by Liana metal

SILVER CREEK

By A.H.Holt. www.ahholt.com

Avalon Books, Thomas Bouregy & Co,Inc.,160 Madison Avenue,New York,NY 10016, 2003, ISBN 0-8034-9600-1, Hardcover, USA \$ 19.95 , 198 pp

Very Highly Recommended

Anne Haw Holt, an FSU Grad student and great-grandmother, says:

“ Becoming a published novelist at sixty-eight is like a dream. ...I'm a bit of a celebrity to my children , my grandchildren, my great-grandchildren, and my friends. In a world that often seems to prefer that people over sixty-five be neither seen nor heard, that's beyond exciting.”

Anne is a Ph.D. candidate in history at Florida State University. She says about her book:

“ My heroes are still cowboys. They represent basic American ideals such as right vs. might, the strong protecting the weak, etc. My favorite part of history is the settlement of the North American, Canadian and South American West. Cowboys bring that history to life.”

Contact Anne: aholt@garnet.acns.fsu.edu

SILVER CREEK is an old fashioned western set in Arizona. The story involves the hero, John Garrett, who returns to Silver Creek to help his father clear his name, and the heroine of the story, Andrea Blaine, who falls in love with John without knowing his real identity and intentions.

There is a mystery, two murders, a little romance ,and a lot of action till the very end of the story. The readers will be hooked by the first chapter of the book introducing John and his desperate attempt to stay alive after his being shot at a gunfight.

“ He felt weak and dizzy. Using his left hand , he rummaged in his saddlebag for a spare shirt. He draped the shirt over his right shoulder with most of it covering the gaping wound created by the bullet's exit.”

Reading this novel the reader will have the feeling of watching a western movie. Vivid scenes of fights and mysterious encounters, liven up the plot , while a love story

unfolds in an old western setting. As the story gradually progresses , the readers will feel the suspense and mystery envelop them.

“ Death water. It sounds almost frightening when you say it like that.” “...one slip and it’s no telling where you’d end up.”

SILVER CREEK caters to everybody who loves fiction, young and old. It has got all the elements a good novel should have , and it keeps the reader’s attention intact to the last pages.

Being a historian Anne gives a striking description of the area which adds a tint of cultural education to the novel. Also her own life experiences – she grew up on a big farm in Virginia- has helped her tremendously in writing about riding horses, tending cattle, cooking over a campfire, and guns.

Anne is now working on her new book titled , The Claim Jumpers , a new western . At present, she is doing a series of mini book tours to promote her book. She also writes poetry and stories for children and adults.

Related Titles

Telmenu Saimnieks by Guntis Goncarovs , www.iuniverse.com

**A review of *The Grasshopper's Secret*
By Renate Stendhal**

Topic

A thirteen-year-old girl, Zelda, resents the arrival in her family of an orphaned boy of eleven, who owns a magic grasshopper. Will Zelda be able to help the boy and change his destiny? Will she be able to change her relationship with him and discover her real inner self? Read the book to find out how Zelda's magical journey through time and space ended up!

Reviewed by Liana Metal

THE GRASSHOPPER'S SECRET A Magical Tale

By Renate Stendhal

Edgework Books , Boulder, CO 80302, www.edgework.com

2002, hardcover, ISBN 1-931223-05-X, USA \$23.95 , 272 pp., Category YA fiction,

Very Highly Recommended.

Renate Stendhal was born in Germany, spent most of her life in Paris, and now lives in California. She is a writer of four other books as well as an illustrator for this book.

THE GRASSHOPPER'S SECRET is a story about the magic in everyday life, the wisdom of nature, the mystery in human relationships, and the powers of healing through understanding and compassion.

The book is divided into four parts:

Part One, *The Secret*, introduces the reader to the heroine of the story, Zelda, a thirteen-year-old girl who won't accept Kidcou, an orphaned boy, as a member of her family. She acts selfishly and rebelliously during their daily encounters, until the day some magic enters her life. A glass charm she owns, takes her away to Italy, Venice, where she meets the Rower.

'Zelda strained her eyes against the glass. The Rower seemed to be wearing a long water-green gown, but it could also be a cape or a raincoat. She followed the Rower around a corner into a maze of canals ...' the writers says .

This magic journey is the beginning of a new relationship with Kidcou.

Part Two, *Into the Past*, reveals Zelda a part of Kidcou's secrets from his past, while , Part Three, *Take me to Italy*, is another magical journey into the past of Kidcou .

In Part Four, *The Way Home*, Zelda comes back to reality but she is a different person now. What is going to happen to her and Kidcou? Are they going to keep fighting? How are they going to react now that all of the boy's secrets have been revealed? And what happened to the grasshopper that vanished into thin air?

In this story the characters can easily identify with real life teenage kids who rebel in their own way trying to find their own personality through their unique magical journey in life. The writer touches our hearts from the very first chapter of this book and makes the readers feel they have to read on to see how the story unfolds.

The plot has a tint of magic, combined with geography and history , and they blend together in such a perfect way that the outcome is a compelling, magical story.

THE GRASSHOPPER'S SECRET is also moving and highly enjoyable ,and caters for all, young and old. Renate Stendhal has definitely found the magic wand that transforms stories into mysteries. The author shows her magic in many parts of the story ,such as when the grasshopper gets ready to take the heroine on a magical journey to Italy:

‘The grasshopper was growing . Or was she shrinking? Her body seemed to be falling away , weightless, to be lifted in the air by the curious gaze that wouldn't let go of her . She tried to scream but the rushing of a strong wind pressed the scream back into her throat.’

THE GRASSHOPPER'S SECRET is a good read for everyone who loves fiction. Enjoy!

Related Titles

-2.3Turtle Saver , L.Parker, www.quailridge.com

A review of God Exists : an Engineer Explains Why By Peter Soszek

Topic

Do you believe that there is a God? The answer to this question is not a simple one for many people. Others don't even care to think about this, while some people try to find out a satisfying reply to that. Peter Soszek is one of those people who believe in God and wants to help others understand some concepts related to the existence of God. If this question pesters you, read this e book and satisfy your inner need for an answer. You may agree with Peter, or you may not, still, by the end of the book you will have made up your mind and will probably have formed your own perspective on this matter.

Reviewed by Liana Metal

GOD EXISTS: an Engineer Explains Why By Peter Soszek, © 2002, e book, 156 pp, Very Highly Recommended.

Peter Soszek, an engineer, had decided that he would write an e book about God. Although he does not consider himself a writer, yet, after a long time he has finally reached his goal. He has become a writer and through his book about God he wants to help people live a happier life.

GOD EXISTS is a philosophy book based on the writer's observations throughout the years, from his childhood till now. Peter tries to unveil the mysteries around us in a simple way and each opinion of his is carefully illustrated by examples of everyday life. This book is actually written by a simple man and is addressed to simple people who wish to think about God's existence.

‘ “Do I believe that there is a god?” The question is very private for a variety of reasons,’ the writer says at the introduction of the book. ‘ The purpose of this e book is to present my perspective and to explain just some of the reasons why I know, without a doubt, that there is God.’

‘ In terms of happiness, I hope that this material will help those people who find themselves stuck at the edge of the fence, choose and get on the right side of the fence,’ Peter says.

The book is divided into three sections:

The first section explains what the author feels are some very fundamental concepts and is important to the overall understanding of the later parts of the book. The second section addresses his perspectives and outlooks on the various sciences: physics, mathematics, engineering, chemistry, biology, a little astronomy and evolution. The third section consists of the writer's answers to what he thinks are common challenges issued by people on whether or not God exists.

GOD EXISTS contains 16 chapters. The first one, Forces of Simplification, deals with a theory about the universe and a force that exists. Peter describes “the law of simplification” in plain words for the readers to understand.

‘ In summary, no matter what a person may create during their lifetime, no matter how complex the item, the Forces of Simplification will eventually act on that item and reduce it to a simpler and more random form,’ the author says.

Chapter two is about Possibility and Probability, and Peter’s theories are supported by events from his childhood, while in chapter three, The Super Labs vs The Primordial Organic Soup, the writer displays the hypothetical challenge of Science vs Nature.

In chapter four, Peter’s theory is based on physics, and chapter five deals with chemistry.

Biology comes next, where the writer says:

‘ Does Biology have a unifying theory of life, basic laws, or a “mathematics” of biology that allows a description of the laws and any systematic advancements?’ Peter tries to analyze that question in depth.

Chapters seven, The Ant and the Universe, is a section where the author recalls certain events from his childhood related to ants and the philosophy of life, while, chapter eight, deals with the Theory of Evolution. Chapter nine hits the point: If There is a God, Why is God Punishing Us All? Read Peter’s viewpoint and find out.

The tenth chapter, Why Doesn’t God just Give me a Sign?, tries to analyze the popular question for people who have doubts about the existence of God, while chapter eleven, A Calculation of God’s Power, answers the question of how powerful God would be.

In chapter twelve, the readers will come to grips with The Ten Commandments:

‘ We need law and order. That is the tough part,’ the writer says.

Who has The Most Toys Wins is the thirteenth chapter where Peter says:

‘ Yeah Right. It is the old- “the rich are getting richer and the poor are getting poorer”. This is a very distressing situation and collectively we have to start changing some attitudes in people about this.’

The following chapter, The Lottery of Life, is about the attraction of gambling and the disastrous results:

‘ The problem is that our soul and this innate sense we feel is beyond all of our regular human senses and any scientific detection methods that may exist. Is this all a part of the sixth sense that we are supposed to have?’

Next comes Fate and Faith: The extreme odd couple.

‘ Is it according to Fate or Faith? The choice likely reflects on our mental outlook , how we act or behave, and even how people view us,’ Peter says.

In the last chapter , Conclusion, the writer gives his answers to the previously mentioned concepts , and finally states:

‘ Please, choose to believe in God. This work has been meant to help and not to hurt. God bless you.’

GOD EXISTS is a inspiring e book , simply written and enjoyable to read . The theories of the writer are well supported by examples of daily life. It caters to everybody who wants to research this issue and is meant to help people become happier.

You can visit Peter’s site at <http://www.mts.net/~pekored> and read the e book . It is free.

About the reviewer:

Liana Metal is a teacher, artist and writer based in Europe. Visit her web site at: <http://lianametal.tripod.com>

ANCIENT WISDOM, MODERN WORLD
Ethics for the New Millenium
by Tenzin Gyatso, His Holiness the Dalai Lama
Abacus, 2001, hardcover, ISBN 0-316-85863-3
UK £ 14.99 , 246 pp, *Very Highly Recommended*

Tenzin Gyatso, the fourteenth Dalai Lama of Tibet, is a political and religious leader , winner of the Nobel Peace prize and famous worldwide.

In this book he writes about ethics and how we can find truth and other fundamental qualities that lead to happiness. It is neither a religious book nor a book about Buddhism, but a book based on universal principles.

A sophisticated ,yet clearly written book , it is by no means a quick read. Personally speaking, I had to stop several times at certain pages to think more about the concepts mentioned.

First, the author speaks about ethics generally, and then shows their connection with the individual and their relation to society by supporting his ideas with simple examples illustrating every day life. He explains in his own unique way some human truths and qualities that, if applied, can bring people happiness, peace of mind and consequently show them the meaning of life.

ANCIENT WISDOM, MODERN WORLD, is a good intensive read for both philosophy lovers and for all those who wish to improve their life.

Reviewed by Liana Metal

Liana Metal is a teacher, artist, reviewer and writer of fiction and non fiction living in Europe. She is currently creating e books .

She welcomes new books for reviewing and your contributions to her sites:

<http://lianametal.tripod.com>

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