

BookGuide Bulletin



A monthly "readers' services" newsletter from the Lincoln City Libraries

Newsletter

December 2008

Vol. 1 No. 28

[Looking for a good book? Each month the BookGuide site has new fiction and non-fiction reviews.](#)

This Month!

Book Talks/Discussion Groups for December
New and/or Featured Booklists
Share Your Own Reviews!!
Staff Reviews
Websites for Readers: Fantastic Fiction
'Casting About

Book Talks & Book Discussion Groups

Bethany Books Talk [Fridays 10:30 a.m.] [441-8550]

Dec 5 ALA Notable Books
Dec 12 Give the Gift of Books
Dec 19 The Mean Magical Streets
[end of Fall/Winter series]

Gere Books Talk [Mondays 2:30 p.m.] [441-8560]

Dec 1 The Mean Magical Streets
Dec 8 A Bushel of Books
Dec 15 Give the Gift of Books
[end of Fall/Winter series]

Just Desserts Mystery Fiction Discussion Group – South Branch [last Thursday each month. 6:45 p.m.] [441-8530 / 441-8570]

Nov/Dec -- Group is on hiatus due to the holidays but interested members can still participate via the new [Just Desserts blog](#)
Jan 29 "Partner in Crime" by J.A. Jance

Great Books Discussion Group [Gere Branch, Thursdays 6:45-8:45 p.m.] [co-sponsored by the Lincoln City Libraries]

Dec 11 Von Clausewitz – "What is War?"

Visit [Book Talks and Book Discussion Groups](#) for more info

Featured Booklists

The following are either "new" booklists added to the **BookGuide** site recently, or older and/or seasonal lists we'd like to shine a light on! **Click on the titles to see the full booklists.**

[Nebraska Author Dan Chaon](#)

Check out this brand-new booklist, dedicated to up-and-coming Nebraska short story writer and novelist, Dan Chaon.

[Nebraska Author Stephanie Kallos](#)

Did you enjoy the past **One Book One Lincoln** finalist [Broken For You](#)? Then find out more about author Stephanie Kallos in this new booklist.

[Mistletoe Mysteries](#)

It's that time again...when the end of the year brings out the bloodthirsty desire for holiday ho-ho-homicides. Our traditional holiday-themed mystery booklist has been completely updated for 2008!

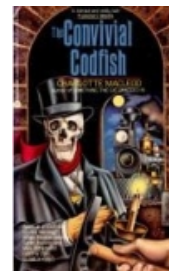
Note to readers seeing this newsletter only as a paper copy – All examples of blue underlined text in this newsletter are hotlinks to pages on the **BookGuide** or **Lincoln City Libraries** web sites. For full functionality, please visit the electronic version of this, and past issues of the **BookGuide Bulletin** at:

<http://www.lincolnlibraries.org/depts/bookguide/newsletters.htm>

Staff Reviews

[The Convivial Codfish](#) by Charlotte MacLeod

As Exalted Chowderhead of the Comrades of the Convivial Codfish, Jeremy (Jem) Kelling, presides over their Christmas revels. Part of the merriment includes skewing a plastic inflatable Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer. The company yells, "Bah, humbug!" Because he is the Exalted Chowderhead, Jem wears the Great Chain with its sterling silver codfish, but when he notices that the insignia is missing, Jem puts in a call to his niece and nephew-by-marriage, Sarah Kelling and Max Bittersohn. This mystery is totally off-the-wall and Jem is an endearingly puckish curmudgeon and eccentric. (When he is injured later in the book, he ducks hospital rules and drinks eggnogs laced with brandy.) Max must tread carefully in his investigation because a member of the Comrades obviously took the "sacred relic" as Jem describes the codfish, and some of them are even family members. The pranks do not overwhelm the mystery in this effort (as they sometimes do with MacLeod). A really great read.



This and other holiday mysteries can be found in the [Mistletoe Mysteries booklist](#)

-- recommended by Rianne S. – Bennett Martin Public Library

[1602](#) by author Neil Gaiman and illustrator Andy Kubert



Intriguing look at the traditional heroes of the Marvel Comics universe, reimagined into the year 1602 by master fantasist Neil Gaiman (*American Gods*, *Good Omens*). The characters of Nick Fury, Daredevil, the Fantastic Four, Captain America, Spiderman, Dr. Doom, The Watcher, the X-Men, Magneto and many more are not simply transported through time. Rather, Gaiman takes these archetypal characters and "reinvents" them -- providing equivalents (with variations on similar names) from individuals in the Elizabethan age. The writing in this series is a nice mix of serious and humorous -- with a major, surprising plot twist towards the end of the story. The art ranges from rough and rustic to highly detailed, often resembled woodcuts. This was original a series of monthly issues, since compiled into a "graphic novel" format. When it originally came out, it polarized comics fans -- some hated it and some loved it. Personally, I found it an interesting comics artifact, and recommend it to anyone who's at least slightly familiar with well-known Marvel Comics characters. If you're not at least passingly familiar with the Marvel Universe, you probably won't appreciate this as much.

-- recommended by Scott C. – Bennett Martin Public Library

[Click here to see more Staff Recommendations from this month plus an archive of all past Staff Recommendations by title or reviewer](#)



Mystery fans are encouraged to visit and post on the **Just Desserts Blog** during November and December. The actual

mystery book discussion group takes a holiday hiatus in November and December, but we've posted [a discussion thread](#) about the works of classic mystery novelist Erle Stanley Gardner (creator of Perry Mason), for mystery fans to discuss... virtually... until the group reconvenes in January 2009!

We'll see you at...the [Just Desserts Blog!](#)

Polley Music Library's Cadenza

Speaking of new library-related blogs – the Lincoln City Libraries' Polley Music Library now has a new blog for news and discussion topics of a music-related nature. We encourage you to stop by the Polly Music Library's Cadenza site at

<http://polleymusiclibraryscadenza.blogspot.com/>

to see the latest news about happenings associated with the Polley Music Library – one of the more unique resources for music fans in Lincoln and on the web.

Web sites for Readers



www.fantasticfiction.co.uk is a literary web site hosted in UK, and featuring a wealth of interesting resources for readers and researchers of works of fiction.

Fantastic Fiction is well-organized. The main front page features most of the best tools in a link row at the top of the page – **Awards, New Books, Coming Soon, Most Popular, Top Authors, Series** and **Years**. **Awards** takes you to listings of over 40 different Award categories. **New Books** allows you to search (by month) for recent new book releases, in both the U.S. and the U.K. **Coming Soon** is very similar, giving listings of books scheduled for publication in next 12+ months. **Most Popular** and **Top Authors** show the books and authors most frequently "searched for" on the Fantastic Fiction site – an easy way to see what books are really hot with readers right now. **Series** allows visitors to search for books that were released under a "series name", in alphabetical order. And **Years** not only provides extensive lists of authors who were born or died in a given year, but also identifies which books won which awards in specific years – no more searching through each award category to compile a list of "the Award Winners of 1997"!

Scroll down the main page a bit further, and you'll find shortened lists of New and Upcoming U.S. hardback releases, in nine different categories (such as Science Fiction, Thrillers, Romance, Mainstream, etc.).

The features already identified would be enough, on their own, to recommend this site as a nice place to browse online. However, the best features of Fantastic Fiction are even simpler – their **author** and **title** search features. On the left side of the site's main page, you can browse alphabetical listings of authors profiled on Fantastic Fiction. On the right side, you'll find search boxes allowing you to search for specific authors or titles.

Search for a **title** – when you get your results, you'll usually see not just a quick blurb about the book, but also listings of all past editions of the title, including recorded and electronic formats, and showing the cover illustrations in most cases. You'll see links to a variety of online booksellers, including auction sites such as **eBay**, and used book networks such as **abebooks**,

where copies can be acquired. You'll also see whether that book was nominated for or won any literary awards.

Search for an **author**, and you'll find a short biography of the individual, and a master list of all books that author has written, including breakdowns of books that appeared in "series", with the proper series order. You'll see listings for forthcoming books by that author (if there are any), and you'll see the covers shown for all their books-to-date. With many authors, you'll also see a listing of other authors' entries on Fantastic Fiction that were looked at by visitors to the site who looked at your specific author. You'll also find links that will help you search for that author's works through networks of U.S. and U.K. used and new bookstores.

The best part of all is that Fantastic Fiction, despite the name, does not merely cover science fiction, fantasy and other types of "fantastic fiction" – it covers every field of fiction publishing, including Romance, Western, Horror and mainstream literary fiction. So, if you're wanting to see how many Harlequin Romances have been written by Nebraska author Julie Miller, you'll find it – and you'll also be able to discover in what order to read Louis L'Amour's Sackett western series.

I won't say Fantastic Fiction is a flawless site – I've occasionally found errors and/or gaps in their information, but I'd be hard pressed to find another site quite as complete and conveniently designed – I encourage you to stop by and browse!

Profiled by Scott C. – Bennett Martin Public Library



'Casting About...

As this December issue of *The BookGuide Bulletin* goes to press, we've got 25 episodes of *BookGuide's 'Casting About'* available on-line, plus 21 podcast recordings of branch book talks, **One Book – One Lincoln** talks, or **Courtyard Book Chats** downtown. You can find them all either on the BookGuide site – look for the blue graphic (at left) next to the titles of *Books Talk* presentations at the second link below, on the booktalk booklists page (third link) – or on the main Lincoln City Libraries site – click on the **Blogs and Podcasts** link at the top of the page to get started. You can also add the Podcasts feed to your RSS feed aggregator if you'd like to automatically receive future *Books Talks*, *One Book One Lincoln* programs and *'Casting About'* Podcasts, as soon as they become available!



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Share your own reviews!!



Don't forget...you have two ways to submit your own review of books or other materials owned by the Lincoln City Libraries.

You can also submit brief reviews directly through the library's online catalog. When looking at the entry for most items in the library catalog, you should see a small **Reader Rating** graphic in the left column (reproduced here at left), showing from 1 to 5 stars, if any readers have thus far submitted a review and rating score for that title. This system, which includes ratings/reviews from library users across the country. On the BookGuide site, under the category **Reader Connections Online**, visitors can submit a **Customer Review** of any material owned by the library system, at any time. Both systems allow users to share their thoughts and feelings about books, dvds, music and other library materials with each other.

Customer Reviews

Read Reviews and Contribute Your Own

Feedback...

We're interested in hearing from you regarding what you'd like to see here in our e-newsletter each month. What have you enjoyed in our past issues? If you have any suggestions or comments to offer us about the *BookGuide* site or the *BookGuide Bulletin*, please drop us an e-mail at:

bookguide@lincolnlibraries.org



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