Representative Jim Colver recently visited Delta Junction to present several Legislative Citations. The Delta Community Library was recognized for receiving a 5-Star rating from Library Journal for 2016 and for providing many years of service to the Delta Junction - Fort Greely community.

Pictured with Representative Colver is Library Director Joyce McCombs, who will celebrate 30 years on the job next March. Also recognized at the ceremony were the State Champion Delta Husky Pee Wee Hockey Team and the Delta Twirlers Baton Team.

The ceremony was held at the Delta Library, and a video of the Twirlers winning routine was shown in the library's OWL unit for the crowd of more than 70 people to enjoy during the reception that followed.

Joyce McCombs, Director
Delta Community Library

(Cont. on pg. 2)
(Chapter News - Cont. from pg. 1)
Did you attend the AkLA conference in Fairbanks this year? If so, you might have noticed a table of friendly authors in the vendor area or a breakout session by children's authors.

These were the PAL (Published and Listed) authors of the Alaska chapter of SCBWI (the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators). Remember that acronym: AK SCBWI PALs!

These Alaskan children's authors are eager to be involved in local events and are a great resource for speakers, books, and programs at your library, in schools, and in your community. Visit their web page, http://alaska.scbwi.org/pals/ for links to the SCBWI Speakers' Bureau, links to individual authors' websites, and a link to join the PALs' mailing list for timely news about author events and books.

Four of their member authors have new books out this spring/summer and are looking to share these books with you and other readers.

- **Libby Hatton, Toklat in Trouble**, illustrated by Libby herself, published by Alaska Geographic
- **Dan L. Walker, Secondhand Summer**, published by Alaska Northwest Books
- **Jen Funk Weber, Been There, Done That, Reading Animal Signs**, illustrated by Andrea Gabriel, published by Arbordale Publishing

If you'd like to reach these local authors, you can contact them individually through their websites, or email the AK SCBWI PAL coordinator, Jen Funk Weber, at akscbwipals@gmail.com

_Lynn Lovegreen_
The Husband's Secret, Liane Moriarty, Berkley, 2013.

How well do we know our spouses, those we live with? One day, hunting for something else, Cecilia Fitzpatrick finds a letter written many years previously by her husband that says "open on my death."

When she decides to open it, she changes her life as well as those around her. A second woman, Tess O'Leary, learns her husband and her cousin/best friend are "in love."

A third woman, Rachel Crowley, has lost her daughter and her husband, and she's still grieving, believing she knows her daughter's murderer. The book is disjointed with chapters that jump from one woman to the next, but eventually the reader comes to understand their interrelationships.

Choices and happenstance establish our lives, while other choices would create totally different outcomes. This book makes a reader think.

Karen Blixen—aka Isaac Den-nison and her paramour, Denys Finch Hatton), and the intensity of Beryl's own emotions, the story engages the reader on every level.

Highly recommended by Junction Readers book club - it was our May selection and generated the comment "I couldn't wait to go to Kenya every night!" from a member.

Circling the Sun, Paula McLain, New York: Ballantine, 2016.

This novel by the author of The Paris Wife was captivating from start to finish. It's a novelized version of the life of aviator Beryl Markham and chronicles her years growing up in the African bush in the 1920s.

With a literally absentee mother and a distant yet loving father, her life was full of physical, emotional and intellectual challenges.

Between the lush descriptions of Kenya, the startling antics of the Happy Valley set (including

Highly recommended by Junction Readers book club - it was our May selection and generated the comment "I couldn't wait to go to Kenya every night!" from a member.

Joyce McCombs
Delta Community Library
Delta Junction

War of the Foxes, Richard Siken, Port Townsend: Copper Canyon Press, 2015

Siken uses the language of visual art to create poems that

(Cont. on pg. 5)
are paintings, landscapes and anything but still-lives. The poems’ speakers engage in acts of imperfect creation as they apply layers of color and meaning.

Siken’s work lingers in the strangeness (not-quite rightness) that exists in the space between things and their artistic representations. The poems contain ekphrastic elements that engage conversations with works of art.

He reveals the unexpected wonders of engaging in creative acts while constantly questioning intent and challenging representation. Any poet struggling over subject will marvel at the way his subjects begin with a small focus, then unfurl. What begins with a man in a field ends with an army of conquerors on horseback.

*Ekphrastic:* a vivid description of a scene or work of art to amplify and expand meaning.

*Pecha kucha:* Japanese presentation format with 20 images displayed for 20 seconds while the presenter speaks.

Lighthead, Terrence Hayes, New York: Penguin Books. 2010

Hayes’ poems are full of racial tension and trauma born of an inheritance of anger and inequality. Characters refuse predictability, write and shed stereotypes, and inhabit pivotal moments in childhood, poetic landscapes scaffolded by innovative forms (pecha kucha, liner notes, imaginary t-shirts).

Lighthead feels akin to Rankine’s Citizen in that both fiercely criticize the notion of a “post-racial America” and present difficult-to-stomach, yet viscerally real, images of everyday racial inequality.

The poems are full of dazzling language informed by ecstatic lyricism and finely tuned ear for the music of the heard and misheard.

This collection will benefit poets looking to innovate with new forms or employ borrowed forms as points of departure and experimentation.


K.B.: The Suspect explores the historical context of post-Soviet Lithuania through a series of persona poems. K.B. is a paranoic, disconnected poet struggling with self-expression after
decades of repression, puzzling over commercial advertising (propaganda?), and displaying a great numbness to human emotion.

In one poem, K.B. pushes past a crowd of onlookers where a tree has fallen and killed a man only to wonder, “What kind of tree is that?” Love, disconnected eroticism, despair, hope and suicide are understated, everyday occurrences.

Amidst the turmoil of personal and national identity emerges Martinaitis’ experimental character K.B. The Suspect.

Martinaitis complicates point of view by including a slippery character known only as the Author and shifts between first, second and third person. Those looking to experiment with point of view will enjoy puzzling over this collection.

Jonas Lam,
Egan Library
UAS Juneau

The story takes place essentially in the 9th arrondissement of Paris and is apparently based on an actual apartment discovered in 2010. It’s told from two perspectives, demimondaine Marthe de Florian’s fictional diary entries of the Belle Epoque and April Vogt’s experiences, a Sotheby’s American furniture expert of modern day.

Once on the scene, April almost immediately wants more than just a random auction of the items but rather an exclusive auction of Marthe de Florian's things. Using the diary entries as provenance, she’s eventually successful, but the intervening events are what make this an entertaining story.

Expect ups and downs in the writing levels, a fair amount of French expressions, and exasperation at April's whining, but definitely a good read

Arrondissement and demimondaine are hard to translate.

(Arrondissements of Paris; source Wikipedia)

“The term demimondaine referred to a woman who embodied these qualities”

[Such behaviors often included drinking or drug use, gambling, high spending (particularly in pursuit of fashion, as through clothing as well as servants and houses), and sexual promiscuity.]

Aldean Kilbourn
Geophysical Institute
Keith B. Mather Library,
UAF Fairbanks


For those of you who were disappointed with J.K. Rowling’s post-Potter The Casual Vacancy (and who else found it tedious?), fear not: she has a terrific private investigator series under the Galbraith pseudonym.

Ex-military investigator Cormoran Strike and his sidekick Robin tackle the learning curves, the mysteries, and the bad guys. I really like the character development and

(Cont. on pg. 7)
interaction, and there are now three books in the series.

Barbara Brown
Blogging at 3rdthirds.blogspot.com
Anchorage

[The Silkworm, Cormoran Strike #2; Career of Evil, Cormoran Strike #3]

Carry On, Rainbow Rowell, St. Martin's Griffin, 2015.

With so many Potter-wannabes, they're usually disappointing. Not so with the Harry-to-the-next-level novel, Carry On. Held my attention throughout. A one-sitting read, and not because it’s skinny.

Barbara Brown
Blogging at 3rdthirds.blogspot.com
Anchorage

ALASKAN EXPERIENCE CORNER

Submitted by Larry Hihpshman—Book Buzz Manager (Kenai).

But you too can submit to the Alaskan Experience column ILbombastico@yahoo.com


This is Laura and Norris Porter’s reminiscence of their two years as Territorial teachers in Flat, [Alaska] 1938-1940. Content suggests it may be based on Norris Porter’s journals and the Porters’ letters. It’s an excellent primary source; an evocation of Bush Life between the World Wars.

If Mrs. Porter wrote it the year of publication it’s pretty amazing since she was about 80 years old! The book identifies by name many people who lived in the Iditarod District just before World War II. It’s well written; mostly funny, sometimes ribald, at times very sad. The book includes probably otherwise unpublished photos and there is a nice hand-drawn map of Flat ca. 1940.

But there are two negative elements:

1. The book is by no means politically correct! Porter recites with little comment contemporary contempt for Alaska Natives.
2. The book is probably self-published. When I checked WorldCat in 2014, the only
(Book Buzz - Cont. from pg. 7)

library copy was at the University of Oregon. By May 2016 the UAA and UAF libraries had obtained copies. Additional copies may be hard to locate.


This short, puzzling book consists of three poems and thirteen short stories, which the introduction says were written by a twelve year old Anchorage resident (Kenneth Ray Roberts, Jr., although the author’s father seems to have had some input).

The writing is very good for a very young author. Most pieces have a slightly gothic flavor, and few deal directly with Alaska.

However, some themes can be discerned: Military families stationed in Alaska, organized juvenile sports, life in Anchorage, and nostalgia for back home, a theme that many non-Native Alaskans share.

The cover displays an attractive portrait photo, presumably the author. It would be appealing to know more about the author, his father, and the motivations and process of writing the book.

READ ON THE FLY: BOOKS FOR KIDS

AKontheGO’s Read on the Fly program is a reading and book distribution project slated for construction in 2016 at the Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport.

Designed to support the concepts of reading and travel in Alaska and beyond, Read On the Fly will be located in multiple strategic locations around the airport: within the “C” concourse (Alaska Airlines), within the “B” concourse, in the regional airlines concourse, and other areas currently under consideration.

With the support of airport officials, corporate, and individual contributions, Read On the Fly intends to be operational by June 2016. Read On the Fly works with a simple premise: get kids reading while waiting for flights, during flights, and long after their journey.

Better still, for families who don’t often read together, books and cozy reading spaces at the planned Read On the Fly sites will offer peaceful respite from the busy hustle and bustle of travel, especially for families traveling between rural areas or overseas.

Details for specific locations are in super, top-secret plans right now! We promised not to tell, yet…

How does Read On the Fly work? http://akonthego.com/blog/read-on-the-fly-books-for-kids
In 1868, on a hot, midsummer day, 28-year-old Mary Lynch was admitted to the Philadelphia Almshouse and Hospital, the city hospital for the poor, better known as “Old Blockley.”

Lynch had tuberculosis, which was soon to be compounded by the parasitic infection trichinosis.

She didn’t recover, dying in Ward 27 the following year, weighing just 60 pounds. The physician who performed her autopsy, John Stockton Hough, had an interest in rare and obscure books, and he was looking to rebind a trio of anatomical texts on human reproduction. So, he removed a section of skin from Lynch’s thigh, tanned it into leather in the hospital’s basement, and repurposed it as the books’ covers.

Lynch lives on in these three volumes, now housed at the Mutter Museum of the College of Physicians of Philadelphia. They are among numerous titles bound with human skin.

For complete article:
COLORING BOOKS FOR ADULTS
HAVE BECOME A TREND

U.S. sales of coloring books of all sorts jumped from one million in 2014 to 12 million in 2015. Many adults who have taken up coloring books claim that it promotes mental well-being. Staying inside the lines, especially in more complex illustrations, takes a lot of concentration, which blocks out distraction.

The trend has spawned coloring contests, a new National Coloring Book Day (Aug. 2 in the U.S.) and social-media pages for sharing completed pictures.

In this sense, coloring could be a species of mindfulness like meditation, which has been shown to reduce stress. Benefits of true mindfulness include everything from reduced blood pressure to increased immune strength, according to scientists.

For complete article, see *Time Magazine*, Mar 14, 2016 p. 58

http://time.com/money/3941973/adult-coloring-books/

Many libraries purchase coloring books or print free pages online for their clubs. Other supplies—such as crayons, markers, and coloring pencils—are also provided. "We just get together and color."

https://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/2015/10/30/coloring-book-clubs/

http://booktrib.com/2015/04/adult-coloring-books-are-the-new-craze/
GENERAL GUIDELINES TO PUBLISHING IN NEWSPOKE

Alaska Library Association
Newsletter

Not accepted: paid advertising; material intended to “sell; make a profit” rather than to “inform.” Submissions viewed as advertisements, unless item is of particular interest to Alaska, Alaskan patrons, libraries, or is submitted by an AkLA member.

Accepted: Alaskana—books, book reviews, or articles relating to, or of interest to, Alaskan librarians and/or their patrons. Informative material related to libraries and librarianship, especially in regard to Alaska.

Most anything submitted by AkLA members—reasonably tasteful, of appropriate length, “decently” well-written; author is willing to submit to possible editorial changes. This may include length, perhaps spellings, downsizing of convoluted sentences... (Editor will make every effort to let the author know of, and pre-approve, any significant changes before the material is published in Newspace.)

Other—determined on an individual basis by “the committee” (defined as a group of at least three AkLA members).

If the Newspace editor, or the individual submitting, has questions or concerns about any submission, the matter will be sent on to the Newspace Committee.
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CALENDAR

ALA Midwinter Meeting, Atlanta, GA
Jan. 20-24, 2017
PLA Leadership Academy, Portland, OR
Mar. 20-24, 2017
ACRL At the Helm: Leading Transformation, Baltimore, MD
Mar. 22-25, 2017
Medical Library Assn., Seattle, WA
May 26-31, 2017
ALA Annual Conf., Chicago, IL
Jun. 22-27, 2017
As our nation prepares to elect new leadership, I’ve been thinking a lot about strategy. Which issues have the campaigns strategically chosen as their platforms? At what point in the game will the candidates choose to strike their heaviest blows? Which weaknesses are they pinpointing and what strengths do they fear in their opponents?

Over the last few months, despite overwhelming odds and what seemed like a far-fetched strategy, the Alaska Library Association Advocacy Committee managed to secure funding for Online with Libraries (OWL). Though we were prepared to negotiate by offering our bare-bones, absolute-lowest number ($325K), funding has been allotted at $661,800. Overall, we sustained a $100,000 cut.

It’s both incredibly satisfying and extremely terrifying to think about how well our hard work paid off and how close we came to losing something that is essential for so many Alaskan libraries.

Which brings me back around to strategy: What plans can we formulate and implement now to prepare AkLA for the future? What are the priorities and values that we will work to achieve and maintain over the next few years?

What strengths do we need to capitalize on and which weaknesses do we need to address?

The Executive Council of the Alaska Library Association is entering another cycle of Strategic Planning. During the last round, the council identified three focus areas: Diversity and Inclusion, Professional Development and Leadership, and Advocacy.

What are the areas that you see as the primary focal points of the Association? Are they properly aligned with your needs as a librarian in the field?

Send us your feedback and help us strategize for the future!

Strategically Yours,
Sara Saxton
ssaxton@ci.wasilla.ak.us