

# BOOKMARKS

Summer 2010 Newsletter ~ The Bookloft ~ Home of Books for the Omnivorous Reader ~ Enterprise, Oregon

*Well, it's been a busy summer here in Lake Wobegon, er, I mean in Wallowa County. So busy that my summer reads issue is threatening to morph into the curl-up-by-the-woodstove fall issue. Oh well, no matter what time of year, you can count on the Bookloft to be your source for good reads and good book recommendations.*

## Summer (or Indian summer) reading:

**LITTLE BEE** by Chris Cleave

I rarely review a novel that hits the top of the bestseller lists. They tend to sell themselves. But this novel was so exceptional that I wanted to encourage you not to miss it. Little Bee is a refugee from Nigeria. Sarah Summers is a woman journalist from the suburbs of London. They meet under extraordinary circumstances that are life changing for both of them. Little Bee has spent time in a detention center in England and is trying to figure out how to survive in a new country. Sarah, married and the mother of a four year old with a batman fixation is trying to figure out her own priorities in life. Each woman struggles, and we get to look at the similar level of distress they experience although the nature of their problems is extremely different. Their transformation comes about as they find meaning in their lives by letting love overcome fears.

This novel is amazingly written with beautiful insights into the characters' lives and struggles. Little Bee is a most unusual character. Though burdened with horrible life experiences, she still sees the beauty around her as well as the horror. She is not perfect, but manages to find balance between doing what she needs to do to survive and being able to help others no matter what the cost. With its compelling narrative, eloquent writing and several gasp-provoking surprises, it was hard to tear myself away from this book once I started reading it. 14.00 Simon & Schuster

**HEAVEN'S KEEP** by William Kent Krueger is a really good thriller. Minnesota private investigator Cork O'Connor's wife is missing following the disappearance of the small aircraft in which she was traveling. The plane was presumed to have crashed when it went off the radar tracking somewhere over the mountains of Wyoming, but it was never located. Months after the event, O'Connor is asked to look into some of the unusual events leading up to the disappearance of the plane. The novel not only has interesting characters, but some great plot twists as well. 15.00 Atria

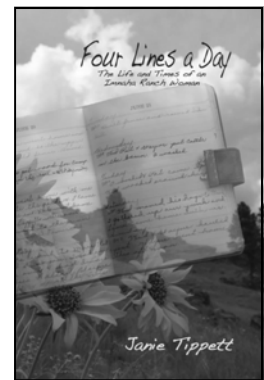
**THE LITTLE STRANGER** by Sarah Waters is a deliciously gothic tale of a haunted mansion in England. In the post World War II years, the family that owns a large estate has run out of money and the house and grounds are deteriorating. A doctor from the local village becomes involved with the family and it is through his story that we witness the unusual activities at the manor. 16.00 Riverhead

**THE SIGNAL** by Ron Carlson tells the story of a 6 day trip in the Wyoming backcountry. Mack and his ex-wife Vonnie take one last trip to a lake they have backpacked to each year for the last ten years. Mack convinces her to go along just to finalize the end of their relationship, but he is also using the trip to earn some money by locating a piece of equipment lost in the area by a man with clandestine ties. By the time Mack realizes the dangerous nature of his task, he has involved Vonnie in a life and death situation. As in his previous book, *Five Skies*, Carlson gives us a well-written story with great dialogue and sense of place. 14.00 Penguin

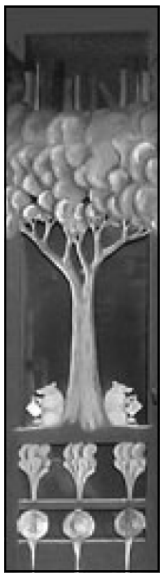
## New Books of Local Interest

Janie Tippett's long-awaited book is now available. **FOUR LINES A DAY** is based on the diaries of Mary Marks who lived in Imnaha. She and Janie were friends and spent much time together. Mary shared stories about her life on the ranch, working hard gardening, cooking, riding and helping with the many tasks involved in raising cattle and taking care of her home. It is a fascinating read and an amazing look at the year round work required to make a living in the Imnaha country. 15.00 Pika Press

We will have a book signing for Janie at the store this fall when things calm down. We will keep you posted!



**BIT, SPUR, AND SADDLE MAKERS OF WALLOWA COUNTY OREGON** by Denny Kehl is a collection of photos and history of the makers of these beautiful pieces of cowboy gear. Complete with the story of various local craftsmen, this book is an excellent document of the talent of our local area. 35.00



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## Found at Fishtrap

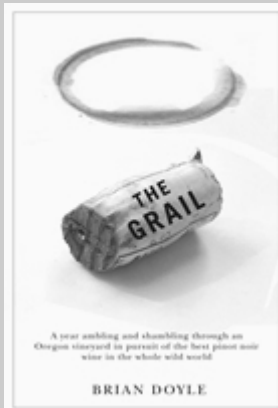
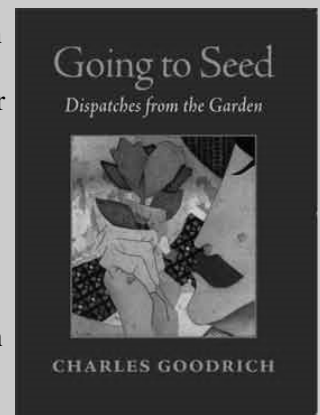
At this year's Fishtrap writer's gathering there were many fine northwest writers presenting their work. Here are a few of the reading discoveries I made by some of those authors.



### **SKY TIME IN GRAY'S RIVER** by Robert Michael Pyle

Pyle lives in an old farmhouse on a wooded track in Washington State near the mouth of the Columbia River. This lovely book is a collection of pieces reflecting his connection to his place. Containing not only beautiful descriptions of plants, animals, seasons and history of the area in which he lives, the book also celebrates the everyday joys of observing and enjoying the life around one. It made me feel more connected to my place and more appreciative of the small pleasures of staying home and taking care of my own bit of paradise. 13.95 Mariner Books

**GOING TO SEED** by Charles Goodrich also celebrates the connection between home tasks, in this case gardening, and life's deeper quandaries. Charles's poems carry us through the seasons and consider various elements of gardening from planting through battles with bugs to harvest and the quiet pleasure of putting the garden to rest at end of season. Throughout the gardening year, through his words, we also reflect on how the rest of life relates to the growing cycle. 14.95 Silverfish Review Press



### **THE GRAIL** by Brian Doyle

This book also follows the growing season throughout a year, but in this case, the garden is a vineyard in the Dundee area of Oregon. Doyle spends the year hanging around this special grape-growing area, observing and gathering stories from the various people involved in the production of some of Oregon's best wine. Doyle's talent is in drawing people's stories out and then relaying them to us in a way that is informative, amusing and poignant all at once. His book covers everything from the planting of a vineyard, to a bit of the history of winemaking and lots about the people involved in the process. His descriptions of their harvest time reminded me of the bookstore during Christmas season – lots of hard work, but great satisfaction in the process. The only possible drawback to the book was that I kept wishing I had a glass of good Pinot Noir each time I picked it up to read it. 18.95 Oregon State University Press