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The Daily Progress

Sunday, June 1, 2003

Book Marks

WILD TIMES: Barnes and Noble Bookstores is hosting a Book Fair and three special events to help save the Virginia Museum of Natural History at the University of Virginia. The events are sponsored by the VMNH and the Virginia Center of Virginia with a special visit from Andy Strala, CEO and the author of the Frank Forester Mystery Series which includes "A Witness Above," "A Killing Day" and "Claw Claws."

To participate go to the VMNH website at www.virginiamuuseum.org. Members and print out a Barnes and Noble voucher. Bring the voucher to store during business hours or attend the events Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. A percentage of sales from store purchases (including gift cards, readers advantage memberships and e-cards) automatically will go toward the VMNH. The events include:

• **Thursday at 10:30 a.m.** "Facts and Fibs about Spiders," a story time with "COC" (local Elementary School's pet tarantula).
• **Friday at 7 p.m.** "A View from the Top," a book of poetry presentation with the Wildlife Center of Virginia, including a live falcon hawk and owl. Learn about animal adaptations, habitats and food chains. Local author Andy Strala will be on hand following the event for a video presentation and talk on video.

• **Saturday 10 a.m.** "Bats: Our Flying Mammals!"
• **1 p.m.** "Hats and Seal Learn" about predators and their prey.
• **2 p.m.** "Bats and Their Dance Learn" about pollination and hive behavior.
The Virginia Museum of Natural History is a statewide system of museum facilities seeking to preserve, study and interpret Virginia's natural heritage.
For details, call 984-0461.

KATZ AND DOGS: Author Jon Katz will be at New Dominion Bookshop at 5:30 p.m. Wednesday for a reading and signing of his new book, "The New Work of Dogs." Writing about his own dogs in "A Dog's Eye," Katz became interested in a larger community of dog lovers and came to realize that in an increasingly fragmented and disconnected society, dogs are often treated not just as pets, but as family members and human surrogates.

The "New Work of Dogs" profiles a dozen such relationships in a New Jersey town. There is the story of Harry, a Weimaraner who provides sustaining emotional strength for a woman battling general breast cancer; Cherokee, companion of a man who has few human friends and doesn't know how to talk to his own family; the Doberman Pinscher Club, whose furry, aloof and sometimes angry women turn to their dog to help them rebuild their lives; and Bert, a dog who has saved 500 dogs from abuse or abandonment in recent years.

Drawn from hundreds of interviews and conversations with dog owners and lovers, breeders, veterinarians, rescuers, trainers, behaviorists and psychologists, "The New Work of Dogs" combines personal narratives with a penetrating look at human/animal attachment and questions whether this relationship shift is a positive phenomenon for both species.

Katz will bring his two dogs, Devon and Homer, to the event. New Dominion asks that attendees not bring their dogs.
For details call 976-2552.

RAINING WINNERS: Barnes and Noble will honor the winners of the Rain on the Roof story contest with a special reading at 7 p.m. Thursday.
The Rain on the Roof contest is sponsored by the Village School, Jantzen magazine and Larkleaves. Winning entries will be published in the spring edition of Jantzen magazine, available as a publication for, for and about girls produced by the Village School.
More than 100 stories were submitted to the Rain on the Roof contest by students from 20 schools. All entries were judged by teachers from the Charlottesville Writing Center, and each story was required to have the phrase "Rain on the Roof" somewhere in the text. The winners include:

• **Core Kelenman,** a fifth-grader at Village School, first place in the fourth- to fifth-grade division.
• **Natalie Gault,** an eighth-grader at Buford Middle School, first place in the sixth- to eighth-grade division.
• **Erinna Parra,** Village School, second place in fourth- to fifth-grade division.
• **Leah Goldfarb,** Walker Upper Elementary, honorable mention, fourth- to fifth-grade.
• **Amelia Campbello,** Village School, honorable mention, fourth- to fifth-grade.
• **Natalie Cochran,** Village School, second place sixth- to eighth-grade.
• **Laura Bickel,** Walker Middle School, honorable mention, sixth- to eighth-grade.
• **Samantha Rivkin,** Village School, honorable mention, sixth- to eighth-grade.
For details, call 984-0461.
From staff reports

DOORS

Readers won't lose with Croutier



Writer Katharine Neville finds all of Aleve Lytle Croutier's works compelling.

The Virginia Foundation for the Humanities' "VABooks" column suggests books for Virginians to read in common. This month, Katharine Neville — bestselling author of "The Egg" and "The Major Cress" — recommends "Seven Houses," and other works by Aleve Lytle Croutier. We hope that individuals, book groups, families and neighbors will read and discuss VABooks' selections.

Aleve Lytle Croutier is the most famous female author of Turkish descent. Indeed, she is the only female Turkish author whose works have been translated into multiple languages — more than 20 at present.

A resident of America from the age of 18, Croutier achieved the almost legendary status with the publication of her non-fiction book in 1988, "Harem: The World Behind the Veil," which was the first modern "insider" look at the comprehensive history of harem life. (As a child in Turkey, Croutier was acquainted with the last of the harem eunuchs; Croutier's own grandfather was raised in a pasha's harem.)

"Harem," filled with lush paintings of harem life, and even richer

the U.S. publication of her highly successful, exotic historic novel, "Palace of Tears" — before she would see "Seven Houses" finally published here in her adopted country. It was well worth the wait. "Seven Houses" is a tour-de-force (Publishers Weekly called it "shimmering prose — a solid success") all the more astonishing when one recalls it is a first novel.

The tale is told, surprisingly but entertainingly, through the "omniscient voices" of the seven different houses inhabited by the one rich and prestigious confectioner of silk barons, the Ipekci family.

A sweeping saga spun like an intricate tapestry, "Seven Houses" brings us from the steamy bathhouses of the decaying Ottoman Empire to the war-torn decades of Turkey's emerging democracy. As four generations of fascinating Turkish women see their private world seem to melt away beneath their feet, they struggle out of their own past like a silkworm trapped in amber toward the uncertain future.

But despite its publication in multiple other countries to enormous acclaim, Croutier had to wait for seven years — until after

Albert Mohlis, fiction editor of BookForum magazine, said he does not believe a book should be ignored because of an author's questionable ethics or behavior.

"If you get rid of all the books that have been published by people excusing or justifying their bad behavior, you'd have a much thinner list of books," he said. "I think it's more of an issue because his crimes were crimes of a writer or of a journalist, and those crimes seem to be more important to other writers or journalists. But I don't think there's anything wrong with him writing a book about what he did. If we're going to start judging novels by the kind of lives the authors have led, we won't have many books to read."

Karen Sandstrom, book editor of the Cleveland Plain Dealer, covered publication of the book in her column, and assigned it to a free-lance reviewer.

"I thought not assign [it] would make a statement that I didn't want to make, which was: We're not going to be reviewing this book that might be of interest to you because we don't like who this person has been to our profession."

"That didn't seem fair to our readers," Sandstrom said.

Lehmann, although he did write about the book, can understand why others did not. "It's entirely defensible. If you read my review of it, I was not exactly taking with the book," he said.

"I think there is something unseemly about the whole thing."

Debate stirs over publicizing tarnished author

By KEVIN CANFIELD
The Hartford Courant

Stephen Glass has been a published novelist for less than two weeks. So what has he done to send book critics and editors into a frenzy of hand wringing and soul searching?

The answer lies not with Glass' book, the tale of a sociopathically dishonest magazine writer titled "The Fabulist" (Simon & Schuster, \$24), but with the identity of its author: Stephen Glass, novelist, also happens to be Stephen Glass, notorious journalistic fabricator.

Before he was "outed" five years ago as a serial fraud artist, Glass, then just 25, was in the process of building a nice career. The author of about 40 articles for the New Republic magazine, he was a respected young writer whose apparent dogged reporting always seemed to unearth the extra detail that transformed a good story into a great one.

Glass wrote a piece about a church that worshipped the elder George Bush. Another of Glass' articles was about a union of mail carriers and Easter Bunnies. Yet another was about a group that wanted yuppies to give up their creature comforts and live in the wild.

Problem was, Glass was a phony. He invented all of the above, and lots more: people, events, dialogue, web sites.

Which is why book editors and critics are divided over how to handle Glass. Should they review his novel, thereby rewarding his bad behavior with the media attention he and his publisher so deeply crave?

Should they treat the book as a news event about the re-emergence of a fallen star?

Or should they punish Glass for his bad behavior and ignore the book altogether?

"I'm here in Washington, and Stephen Glass was a big story," said Chris Lehmann, deputy editor of the Washington Post's Book World, noting that Glass did his fabricating for the Washington, D.C.-based New Republic.

"The novel had been covered already in the Post's Style section, so when it came in it was more a question of who needed to read it fast. That's just part of the job here."

Further removed from the scene of Glass' journalistic crime, other editors went little or nothing to do with Glass' book.

"I can't imagine we'll do anything," said Jerome Kramer, editor of Book magazine.

"On the comparatively rarefied stage of journalism — but even on the greater stage of morality in general — he's really kind of reprehensible. I think most people who are not phenomenally stupid would feel similarly. I certainly don't want any part of giving the guy more spotlight."

"I understand it's a little bit of a rehabilitative nibble," Kramer added, "but I sure don't see the proceeds of going to a journalistic ethics workshop. It's just a guy who has been in on people's goodwill, trust and has tasted it from journalism, and then

has come back and done it again."

At the Hartford Courant, book critic Candice Goldberg expressed similar feelings.

"I have not made a final decision about reviewing Glass' book, but am leaning strongly against it," Goldberg said. "The Courant typically receives more than 100 books each week, and we have only enough space to review a handful."

"I would much rather devote that space to works by established or emerging authors whose work has earned respect, rather than giving publicity to someone who deliberately defrauded his readers as a journalist and now seeks to capitalize on his inexcusable behavior by publishing a different sort of fiction."

Others think ignoring the book is a disservice to readers.

"There's something a little schoolmarmish about ignoring the book that I'm uncomfortable with," said David Kiper, book critic for the San Francisco Chronicle. "I think this book, right or wrong, is news. That doesn't mean that you have to give it great editorial space, but I don't think people want something willfully ignored. I think they want a newspaper to tell them what's going on."

Conceding that the weekly deluge of new books might prevent him from reviewing Glass, Kiper added, "The annals of literature are full of bastards who write beautifully. I don't know if he's one of them. But he showed a lot of really smart guys for a long time, so I'm unsurprisingly curious."

'Evan Only Knows' where all the lightness has gone

By MARY CAMPBELL
Associate Press

The books in Rhys Bowen's series featuring Welsh Constable Evan Evans have often been light, quaint and amusing. However, the latest, "Evan Only Knows," gets serious.

This seventh installment begins with the discovery of foot-and-mouth disease. As it dunes with forest fires, an empty zone is created around the affected region to stop its spread. All sheep in certain areas are being killed, including those on the farms around Landfar, Evans' territory.

The sheep farmers face total ruin. Many are Evans' friends. He can't face them as a police officer who must support the government's edict, so he takes time off and, with his fiancée, goes to Swansea to visit his mother-in-law.

There, a young man who served four years for shooting Evans' policeman father dead during a drug bust has been arrested again, this time for murdering a young woman and leaving her body on the doorstep of her well-to-do parents' home. Emotionally, Evans would be better off back home among the sheep farmers.

The Swansea police are happy to let Evans talk to the suspect in

Book Review

Evan Only Knows
Rhys Bowen
St. Martin's Press, \$23.95, 230 pages

Evans dislikes the young man but his intuition tells him the prisoner didn't murder the girl.

Evans investigates. At first, everybody assumes he's trying to get more evidence against the suspect. When it looks like he might be trying to find a different guilty party, the police and Evans' mother are outraged.

The mystery isn't very mysterious. The strength of the book is Evans' methodical way of trying to get the truth, despite all the pressure, from without and within, for him to just in getting the prisoner convicted.

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