



Literary

Gazette

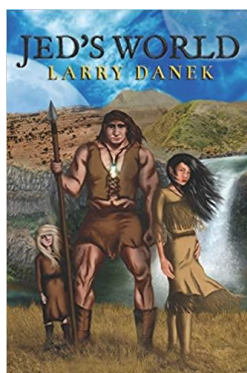
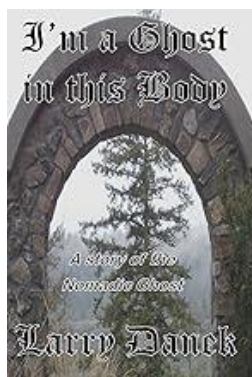
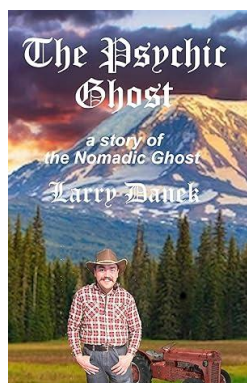
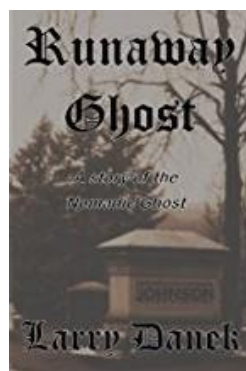
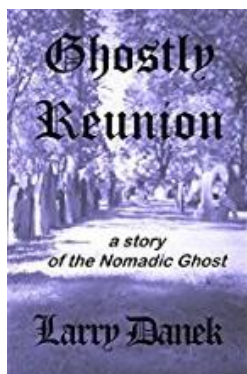
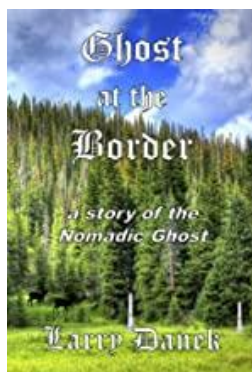
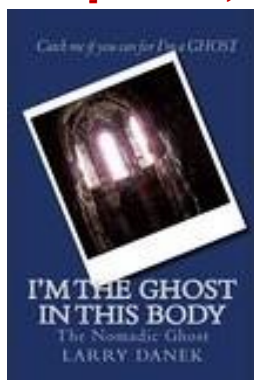
July 2026

HAPPY 250th USA!

Spokane Authors

2504 W. Walton Ave.

Spokane, WA 99205-1569



Spokane Authors and Self-Publishers (SASP), now known as **Spokane Authors**, began in 1998 when *Chuck O'Conner, Elmer Freeman, Joe Meiners, and Dan Vollmer*, Spokane area authors, formed a club to share knowledge and experience with those interested in writing and alternative publishing. Today, Spokane Authors is an organization dedicated to anyone interested in any aspect of writing and art. Members include aspiring (and successful) authors, poets, writing instructors, and many others. Monthly meetings provide inspiration and education by way of knowledgeable and entertaining guest speakers, and the cheerful camaraderie of people sharing common interests and goals. Membership is open to all who love writing, art, and interesting people.

Spokane Authors meets the **second Friday** of each month at the **Sans Souci West Club House**, 3231 W. Boone Ave., Spokane.

The meeting room opens at **1:30 pm**.
Presentations and discussions begin at **2:00 pm**.

Spokane Authors also meets the **third Wednesday** of each month, at the **Sans Souci West Club House**, 3231 W. Boone Ave.

The meeting room opens at **5:30 pm**.
Presentations and discussions begin at **6:00 pm**.

We set up a collection jar for those who wish to help reimburse whoever might bring refreshments.

Membership benefits include listing on the Spokane Authors website, www.spokaneauthors.org. Many members provide short biographies and links to external personal websites, creating more marketing exposure. Current members may list and describe their published works on the Spokane Authors website and offer their work for sale at meetings.

Visit the "members" page on our website to connect with members' webpages. Our "links" page connects to interesting on-line locations.

Guest speakers inform, inspire, and entertain with a variety of topics designed to provide knowledge about writing and publishing.

Spokane Authors members are encouraged to purchase or trade completed works with fellow members. They are also encouraged to donate copies of their work as door prizes. Winners of other members' work are expected to provide a review.

Note: Your name tag is yours to keep and maintain. We provide space to display your books, but *you* must bring them to each meeting.

**Submissions Due
July 30th for the August 2026
issue.**

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"Like" the Spokane Authors Facebook Page:
www.facebook.com/pages/Spokane-Authors-Self-Publishers/1640079982945679

"Join" the Spokane Authors Facebook Group:
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1646364128981815/>

"Follow" us on "X": <https://twitter.com/AndAuthors>

Contact us at: spokaneauthors@gmail.com

Videos of many of our presentations are available at:
<https://www.youtube.com/@spokaneauthorsforyou>
Links for newer videos are in the Vice-President's message and in accounts of our most recent meetings

New Video Channel!
<https://www.youtube.com/@SpokaneAuthors-Org>
(Eventually all videos of our meetings will be on this channel)

On the cover: Longtime Spokane Authors member Larry Danek writes stories about the Nomadic Ghost and more!

OUR JULY MEETINGS!

2:00 pm. Friday, July 10, 2026, San Souci West Club House, 3231 W. Boone Ave., Spokane, WA. Meeting room opens at 1:30 pm. Erik Schubach will be our speaker.

6:00 pm. Wednesday July 15, 2026, Sans Souci West Club House, 3231 W. Boone Ave., Spokane, WA. Meeting room opens at 5:30 pm. We'll have a workshop on basic story structure.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

(Includes last month's column which was accidentally omitted.)

Good morning.

For all of you just waking up from a long winters nap, it's June already. If you aren't living in a fairy tale, you have nothing to worry about.

Six months have passed since 2026 got started and the weeds in my garden are the best I've ever seen! Wow!

Our first event of the year with MAC, I think was successful, even though the turnout was small. We had a wide range of topics from our speakers and a good Q&A from the audience. Thank you to everyone that attended and had your books on display.

Always looking forward to what's ahead. I like to stop from time to time and look back to see where I've been. I have learned to stop because I run into things when I don't look where I'm going. We have six more months to make an impact on 2026, let's make it a good one.

See you all on the 12th.

(And now for the current month)

Good morning and Happy 250th birthday. I truly hope none of us were there for the nation's 1st birthday. Although

sometimes I feel like I was.

I'm glad we made it this far and I am already making plans for our 300th. I will be 118 years old by then. Yah, I know, however, it's peanuts by geological and astronomical standards. And I have been told from time to time that I have rocks in my head or I can be just a little too far out there.

People need to make up their minds.

I hope everyone that wanted to has submitted a short story to our anthology so we can put it together, get it edited, formatted and published. I think currently we have about 15 stories and today June 30th is the deadline. You will need a picture and author bio to go with your short stories.

(Now Dave, if you double space this letter and make it 18-point type, it will look a lot longer than it is... Well Carl, it ain't gonna happen!)

Your Prez

Carl/Nathan

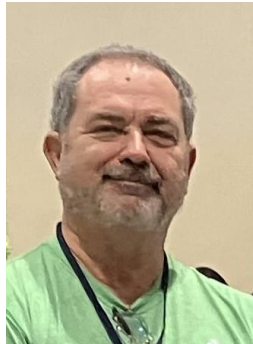
FROM THE VICE-PRESIDENT

Our Country's 250th Birthday!

In anticipation of this Fourth of July, what are your plans to celebrate the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence and the birth of our country? Whether it's a family picnic with or without barbecue, swimming at one of the many lakes around our area, or watching a fireworks display after dark, I always anticipate a "Fun Time For the Fourth." (PS: if you would like to see a small sample of fireworks I recorded several years ago, copy or click on this link. <https://youtu.be/UuJOSh7ujbw>)

Now to our local Spokane Authors news.

Help us welcome back by popular request our July guest speaker Erik Schubach. Erik has a wealth of knowledge and experience in the self-publishing realm, and he is happy to share some of his expertise with us on the topic "Tips, tricks, and challenges of



writing a series.” Come listen to Erik at our Friday, July 10th meeting at 2:00 p.m. at the Sans Souci West clubhouse, 3231 West Boone Avenue in Spokane.

For our Wednesday evening meeting, July 15th beginning at 6:00 p.m., we will have a workshop on basic story structure. There will be handouts, and attendees are encouraged to bring a notepad and pen or pencil. You may also bring a laptop computer, if you wish. Same venue: Sans Souci West clubhouse.

Our speaker for the August 14th meeting will be Joan M Kop, who will share with us on the topic “Book Club Kits or How to Easily Get Your Books in the Library.” The August 19th meeting will be an exercise and workshop on character creation, development, and story arc.

By the time July 1 rolls around, we should have received all the anthology submissions and be in full swing of the editing process. Many of you submitted your stories in plenty of time to complete the editing, and I have put them into the final layout for the book. There is much yet to do, but it looks like we will be ready to send to the printer and upload to Amazon by September 30th. Don’t forget to send Dave your release form so we can use your story in our anthology. Deadline for that form will be August 31st.

Th-th-that’s all for now, folks. See you at the meetings.

V. P.

Sue Eller

FROM THE EDITOR, WEB-MASTER, TREASURER

At present the July issue of our newsletter is ready to go other than this column, All I have to do is write it and then I can send it out. Of course, I’ll have to print a hand full of copies for those few who still get it that way. Hopefully I’ll get those copies printed and in the mail before the holiday weekend. (And even if I don’t, they’ll go out on Monday and should arrive in plenty of time.

You may want to look at the **Members** page on our website. I finally updated it to

reflect current membership status. If you have not paid dues for 2026, your name will not appear there. Thus, there is no link to your member webpage. Please remember to bring your dues to our next meeting or send them via USPS to the address shown below.



I’m sure there is more information I should include, but it currently is eluding (avoiding) me, so we’ll call this version of the column... and the newsletter good to go.

To pay your dues, bring cash or check to a meeting, or if I remember my “Square” card reader, you can use a credit or debit card. You can also send dues payments to:

Spokane Authors
2504 W. Walton Ave.
Spokane, WA 99205-1569

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dave McChesney".

OUR JUNE 2026 MEETINGS

Compiled by Genny La Morgan and Dave
McChesney

Friday, June 12th saw Spokane Authors meet at the Sans Souci West Club House on West Boone Avenue. Attending were: Caryl Briscoe-Michas, Joel Craig, Larry Danek, Sheri Decker, Gary Edwards, Mark Lee Golden, Anna Goodwin, Suzanne Holland, Keven Hostbjor, Genny La Morgan, Amy Logan, Bob Manion, Dave McChesney, Carl Northrup, Elena Smith, and Sarah Vail.

Several members who normally attend were not there, and we did not have a scheduled speaker. Carl Northrup called the meeting to order at 2:20 pm. and then read a Ghost Writer story provided by Larry Danek. “The Spirit was willing but the flash bulb was weak.” Gary Edwards mentioned he had finished his new opera about Queen Califia and how California got her name. He also relayed the basic story of the event to us.

Lastly he said he would be participating in an upcoming Liberty Lake Farmer's Market.

There was some discussion about adding illustrations to books, hiring artists, and letting children color drawings in books.

The Spokane Authors Anthology is being edited. Editing can add and even double the word count. Please contribute to our Anthology. Sue Eller is collecting our stories! (Submissions due by June 30.)

Mark Lee Golden read a poem regarding a man waiting for his email, who turned to frenzied writing instead.

Someone mentioned that a novel is 50,000 words or more. It was also noted that our newsletter, SPOKANE AUTHORS LITERARY GAZETTE, generally lists our future speakers. It goes as a PDF attachment to all who have email access, hopefully a week before our Friday meetings.

We drew tickets for a rather slim selection of door prizes and closed the meeting out at 3:00 pm. A good time was had by all.

Spokane Authors was scheduled to meet at the Sans Souci West Club House at 6:00 pm. on Wednesday June 17. Sue Eller, who normally conducts this alternate meeting would not be there, so Dave McChesney volunteered to lead it. As other regular attendees were also out of the area, and possibly because of the time of year, only two others showed up. We held a general conversation until we were sure no one else was coming. Then we put the room to rights and departed.

UPCOMING EVENTS

INWG First Wednesday (now at 7:00 pm), Third Wednesday (now at 2:00 pm), and Coffee with Linda are taking time off over the summer and will not meet during June, July, and August.

Spokane Authors

Friday, July 10, 2:00 pm
Sans Souci West Clubhouse.
Erik Schubach will speak

Spokane Authors

SPOKANE AUTHORS LITERARY GAZETTE

Wednesday July 15, 6:00 pm.

Sans Souci West Clubhouse

Critique session and more for our anthology and/ or other writing projects.

Spokane Authors

Friday, August 14, 2:00 pm

Sans Souci West Clubhouse

SA member Joan Kopczynski will speak

Spokane Authors

Wednesday August 19, 6:00 pm.

Sans Souci West Clubhouse.

Sandpoint Writers on the Lake

Meet twice each month, both in person and via ZOOM for critiques. Information at bonniemcdade@gmail.com

SASP BOOKS ON AMAZON/KINDLE

Many members' books are on Amazon and/or Kindle™ (We print short parts of the list on a rotating basis. The complete list, RECENTLY UPDATED, is available on the website, under "NEWS.")

To speed your search, add the provided ten digit numerical or alpha-numerical code (ASIN) to: [www\(dot\)amzn\(dot\)com/dp/](http://www(dot)amzn(dot)com/dp/)

Larry Danek

I'm the Ghost in this Body: The Nomadic Ghost

B01I0Z500Q

Jed's World

B00MWDJ1YY

Jed's World (New, Revised Edition)

B08HSPQPG6 B08HW4F323L

Ghostly Reunion: A Nomadic Ghost Story

B077KHR33M

The Runaway Ghost: Story of the Nomadic Ghost (Vol. 3)

1986978605

Ghost at the Border **B089S6TWXT B089M1D93T**

Pioneer Ghost: A Story of the Nomadic Ghost

B0957397G1 B094TCDBGZG

The Psychic Ghost: A Story of the Nomadic Ghost

B0CW1FW81C B0CW3FP2Y2

Seven Down

B0DXQJBVN4 B0DVZN86R3

Esther J. Hildahl

Meadow Pond

B072FS1CLL 154244828X

Mr. Inky: Spider with an Attitude

B07177PLGX 1542451248

Marie's Marvelous Tomato

B073SFTS74 1548307653

Poovie the Fly and Friends

B07HNQLKMW 1724038427

Winter Stories

B09BGF8TGL

Russell H. Ford

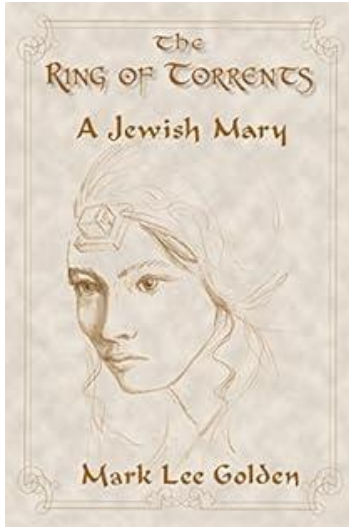
Depop

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Re-Ring

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FEATURED BOOK REVIEWS



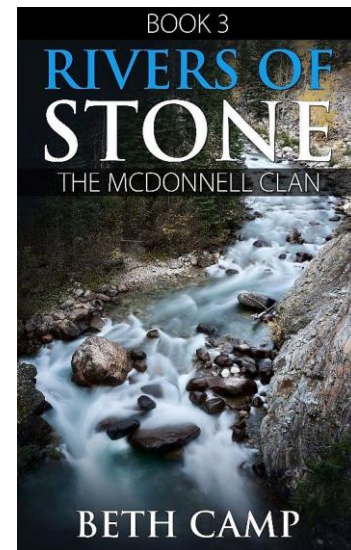
Reviewed by Elena smith

I borrowed this book at a meeting of Spokane Authors. Although I consider myself spiritual but not religious, I'm deeply curious about biblical subjects, especially interpretations that expand beyond traditional scripture. Mark Lee Golden's decision to imagine the private world of Mary—the mother of Jesus—her thoughts, routines, and inner life, immediately captured my attention.

What impressed me most was the richness of the writing. Through Golden's vivid storytelling, I gained fascinating insight into Jewish philosophy, traditions, language, and everyday life before the birth of Jesus. The historical and cultural detail adds remarkable depth and authenticity to the narrative.

I also appreciated the author's honesty in describing the book as "educated speculation" rather than an attempt to impose doctrine or religious certainty. That candor made the story feel thoughtful, respectful, and intellectually engaging and valuable.

I would recommend this book to readers drawn to the mystery surrounding the Virgin Mary, the immaculate conception, and the early life of Jesus—as well as to anyone who appreciates elegant, immersive writing



Reviewed by Sue Eller

Catriona McDonnell's greatest fear is deportation back to Scotland, where she would never see her beloved husband, Dougal, again.

Beth Camp brought me so completely into the story of Catriona and her trek across the continent, that I found myself shivering and hungry. Her descriptions of the characters' experiences and feelings, of life in the primitive areas of Canada and the northern United States, and the hardships explorers and settlers endured, draw the reader into the story as few writers can. If you enjoy historical fiction, adventure, and a quest driven by love and hope, you will enjoy Rivers of Stone.

Reviewed by Betty Deuber

In her third McDonnell novel, RIVERS OF STONE, Beth Camp tells the story of a new bride, Catriona, who declines traveling to the Americas' east coast with her family as an indentured servant. Instead, she chooses to sail to the Americas on the Hudson's Bay Co. ship, Prince Rupert, as a hired-on-hand—disguised as Cat, her husband's brother. They dock at Hudson's Bay fort, York in September

1842

When Catriona's husband, Dougal, and his younger brother, Colin, are sent west with a brigade, Catriona/Cat stays behind at York, working as clerk and copier. Losing her advocates and protectors, she constantly looks over her shoulder in fear of someone discovering her deception. Nor only here, but throughout the novel, the reader feels Catriona's deep anxiety about the pretense, about sleeping in the same room with unwashed men and how she endures the severe winter climate in northern Canada.

Catriona/Cat acquires strength and stamina of a young man and picks up the fort's lingo. Yet the reader gets a chance to know her as a woman when she shows her true female feelings in secluded places. When Dougal doesn't return in a year, like he promised, she desperately tries to hide her fear of abandonment. Later, when Dougal's letters stop, Catriona grieves in solitude. Then she buckles up and joins a brigade going to Vancouver in search of Dougal. The reader is intimately involved with the young woman as she—struggles in her four-year search—endures the blizzards, floods and treks over the Canadian Rockies beside rough-tough furmen, buffalo hunters, scoundrels, breeds and friends.

Rivers of Stone is an interesting read. Compliments to Beth on the thorough bibliography she provided, as well as how she kept the narrator-third person-direct throughout the novel. I would have liked to have followed a map of Catriona's journey

Reviewed By D. Andrew McChesney

In Scotland, in the first half of the nineteenth century, countless farmers were forced off their land so wealthy landowners could devote the countryside to pasturing sheep. As a result of this forced upheaval, Catriona McDonnell, her husband Dougal, and his brother Colin hire on with the Hudson's Bay Company. Known as Cat, she disguises herself as a boy and pretends to be a third brother.

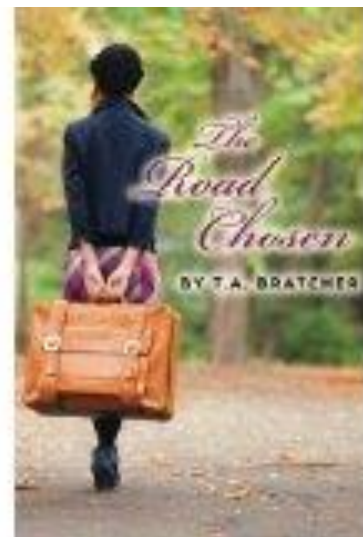
Once arriving at York Factory on the icy shores of Hudson's Bay, she is soon put to

work as a clerk in the trading post. Soon Dougal is sent to Fort Vancouver while she is forced to remain behind. Not only must she cope with her husband being away, she must maintain her identity as a boy, lest she be sent back to Britain. This then is the story of her trials over the next several years. During this time she makes friends, enemies, and nearly gives up hope of ever being reunited with Dougal.

Extremely well written, *Rivers of Stone* excels in authentic detail of the time. The suspense as Cat maintains her masquerade and her longing for Dougal continues at a high level throughout the story. Also notable is her willingness to make friends with, and to be friended by those of other origins, including members of the Cree Nation.

This is an entertaining, informative, and absorbing read. It is Book Three in the story of *The McDonnell Clan*, but it need not be read in sequence with the first two volumes. It is truly a stand-alone work, and its quality should convince readers they need to read the other stories in the series as well.

The Road Chosen



T. A. Bratcher

Reviewed by Esther J. Hildahl

This story begins when Grace is born to an unwed drug addict and is adopted by an older couple, who have two grown sons that they adopted many years ago. When she was thirteen, her parents decided to move

from England to the United States, eventually settling in New Hampshire. Being very smart, she was placed in high school where she did not fit in and experienced brutal bullying. Her life took another turn when her mother became very ill and she had a life-changing decision to make that resulted in a violent altercation with her father. After that, she and her brother Lee set off on a fact-finding adventure to learn the truth about Grace's life.

The Road Chosen is a book well worth reading. It's different, interesting, and never boring. Bratcher has done a wonderful job of bringing her main character, Grace, to life. The reader truly cares about her as she searches for a meaningful life and cheers her on as she struggles to overcome one obstacle after another.

This book is available at bookstores and online.

Reviewed by Kate Poitevin

Ms. Bratcher has shared a compelling, sometimes heart-wrenching, tale about a young girl's struggle to survive high school bullies and an unconventional family dynamic. At one point she caused me to burst into tears, while sitting in my car in a parking lot. (You'll know where it was when you get there)

It is sometimes hard for those of us who had 'normal' childhoods, to believe these things really happen, but they do. It is also hard for us to be confronted with these realities, but we must.

This book really opens your eyes as to what might be lurking in the past of those around us. One never knows what hardships and horrors might have been the norm for the person we see on the bus daily. The old adage, "walk a mile in his shoes" is so true. Ms. Bratcher allows us to walk along with Grace, to experience with her, as she suffers through her teens and comes out a strong, caring, young adult. I know there is more to her story and I hope we get to read it. Grace's story will stay with me for a long, long time.

Reviewed by Sue Eller

Grace's life is filled with challenges most

of us never have to face. An orphaned child of a drug addict, she is adopted by a couple who eventually move from England to the United States. Through adversity she maintains a positive outlook on life. *The Road Chosen* encompasses true and lasting friendships, unconditional love, the importance of family, and a positive outlook on life. The author draws the reader into Grace's story and creates memorable and loveable characters. Note: some scenes are too intense for young children.

Available at local bookstores in the Spokane area, across the United States, and in the United Kingdom. Visit T. A. Bratcher's website: www.tabratcher.com for more information.

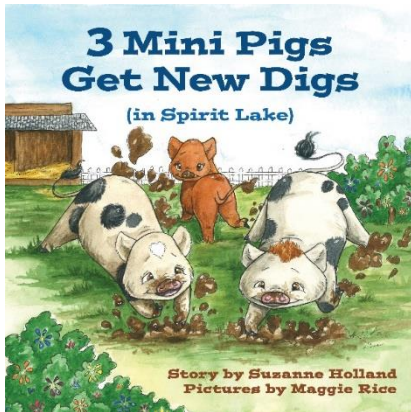
Reviewed by Robert G. Hildahl

This story is about Grace, a young teenage girl who has just moved to the States from Europe. Her first year of high school in North Conway, New Hampshire, is not a very happy one. Being an outsider, being from Europe, and being very smart means she is not accepted by the local students. She ends up being brutally bullied and makes only one friend.

Later in high school when she is named valedictorian of her class, she is beaten by two boys and put in the hospital. Then her life takes another tragic turn when her mother becomes very ill.

After that, Grace and her brother Lee go to Europe to learn the truth about Grace's early life and why her elderly parents adopted her after raising their two sons, who were also adopted. Many surprises await Grace as she learns the truth about her biological mother and her past.

I highly recommend this book. It's well written and a good read. *The Road Chosen* is available at bookstores and online.

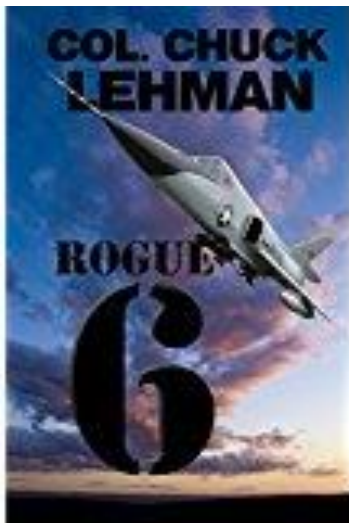


Story by Suzanne Holland
Pictures by Maggie Rice

Reviewed by Esther J. Hildahl

This is the cute, humorous story of three mini pigs, named Woody, Pippi Anne, and Penny Mae who are packed up in two crates and taken to Spirit Lake to live. Of course, the siblings are frightened but soon adjust to all the fun things of their new home like the green yard, wading pool, toys, good things to eat, their pig-sized ranch house, and their new family.

I like that this story is told in rhyme. The colorful illustrations are fun, wonderful, and well-done. At the end of the story, the author and illustrator created several fun activities for children, which include drawing, coloring, searches, and facts about mini pigs. I recommend this book for children, preschool to second grade. I also recommend this book for parents, for it is an excellent read-aloud book.



Reviewed by Sue Eller

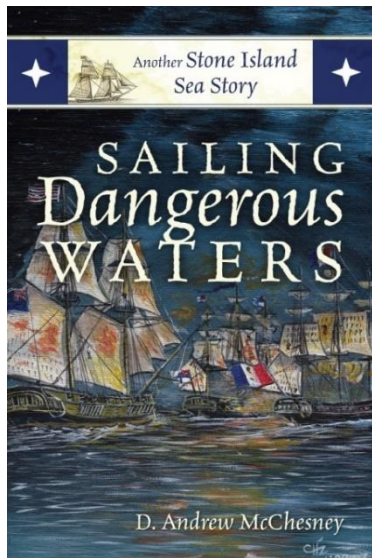
Air Force Captain Rusty Markham is sent on a mission to shoot down his childhood friend, who is flying an F-106 fighter plane to Cuba to turn over to Communist dictator Fidel Castro. Set in the era of the Cuban Missile Crisis and an uneasy peace between Cuba and the United States, agencies and countries on both political sides focus on the chase. Lehman begins near the end of the tale and uses the tension and conflict to keep the reader engaged as he weaves back story and relationships in ever more complicated detail. The author's first-hand knowledge of the planes, the techniques, and the lingo bring a realism to the story that makes it hard to believe it's fiction. The values of duty, honesty, integrity, and friendship sometimes seem to war against each other, while an unexpected element tweaks the outcome.



By Larry Danek

Reviewed by Robert Hildahl

I have read all of Larry's books and this one, the third in his *The Nomadic Ghost series*, is my favorite one. It takes place in a ten-year-old boy's body who was abused and starved. The Nomadic ghost enters the boy's body and what he does is unexpected and surprises everyone. This story is fast paced, well written, and very entertaining. I recommend it to everyone, especially, those who like ghost stories.



By D. Andrew McChesney

Reviewed by Kate Poitevin

Sailing Dangerous Waters picks up where *Beyond the Ocean's Edge* left off. Equally well written, I continued to love/hate the characters accordingly and was present as they explored and settled into the new world, made new friends and got caught up in the local politics. I was frustrated along with Pierce and his men as they strove to make ready to return to England.

Mr. McChesney is a talented writer who can make you smell the sea air, feel the deck roll beneath your feet, and even duck and cringe and cover your ears at the sounds of cannon. He really must get that third installment out.

Reviewed by Sue Eller

Captain Pierce misses his beloved Evangeline and tries everything in his power to get back to her. He leaves Stone Island to return home, but his plans and hopes are thwarted by an enemy who should have been a friend. Pierce struggles to understand an unfamiliar government dynamic, uses all his diplomatic skills to try to get his ship released, and makes some unexpected friends along the way. *Sailing Dangerous Waters* continues the *Stone Island Sea Stories* as McChesney captivates the reader and draws him in to another thrilling adventure.

Reviewed by Esther J. Hildahl

It's the early 1800s. Captain Edward Pierce of the HMS *Island Expedition* and his crew, who are thought to be pirates by the Tritonish Government, have been held captive for a year.

When they are finally freed, Edward's hope is to leave this parallel world and sail home to England. He is anxious to see Evangeline, the love of his life, who he hasn't seen for three years. But before they can leave, their ship needs to be repaired.

After repairs are completed, they are on their way. However, their journey is a dangerous one, for England and France are still at war. They have a fierce battle with a French ship and Captain Pierce is shocked when he discovers who the captain of this vessel is.

Eventually, Edward and his crew arrive home. Edward worries that no one will believe his stories of the strange, but similar other world, he and his crew discovered beyond the ocean's edge.

Sailing Dangerous Waters, the second of the *Stone Island Sea Story* series, ends with Edward and Evangeline meeting to discuss their future. Much has happened since they last saw each other, especially in Evangeline's life.

McChesney spins an exciting story with lots of detail and action. His characters are well-defined and interesting. He is very knowledgeable about naval history. He has a good command of the language of the time and knows how a ship and its crew work.

I enjoyed reading this book and recommend it for one and all.

(More reviews of *Sailing Dangerous Waters* in next month's issue of the Spokane Authors LITERARY GAZETTE.)