

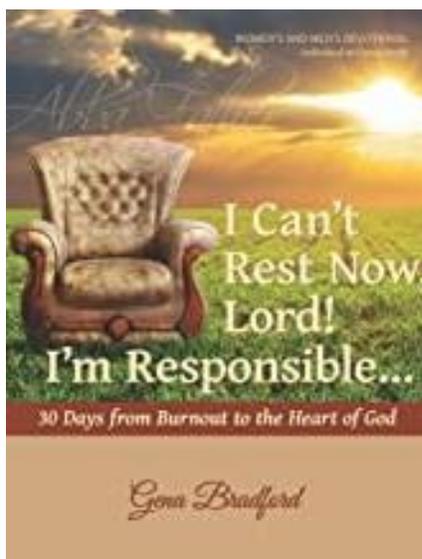


Literary

Gazette

March 2026

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
March 31st for the April 2026
issue.**

2026 Officers:

President: **Carl Northup (Nathaniel Bennett)**
(509) 445-0166
(509) 671-3949
ikneadedthat53@yahoo.com

Vice-President: **Sue Eller**
(509) 499-2012
sue@emilytracemysteries.com

Secretary: **OPEN**

Treasurer, Newsletter Editor, and Web Master:
Dave McChesney
(509) 325-2072
(509) 768-6178
daveeva@comcast.net
d.andrew.mcchesney@gmail.com

Public Relations: **Guy Twins**
(509) 869-6624
guytwins@gmail.com

Equipment Manager: **Bob Hildahl**
mr.inky@yahoo.com

Advisory Board:

Member: **Caryl Briscoe-Michas**
(509) 328-0206
ennalyrac@hotmail.com

Member: **Mary De Bord**
(509) 999-4797
violetpetalsbook@gmail.com

Member: **Debby Putman**
(805) 340-8859
debbyputman@msm.com

"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>

On the cover: Spokane Authors member Gena Bradford is the author of I Can't Rest Now Lord! I'm Responsible...

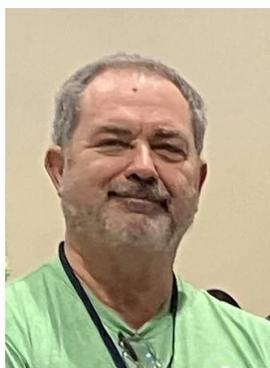
OUR MARCH MEETINGS!

We will meet at 2:00 pm. on Friday, March 13, 2026, at the San Souci West Club House, 3231 W. Boone Ave., Spokane, WA. The meeting room will be open at 1:30 pm. Anna Goodwin will talk about writing her father's biography, *By Force and Fear: A Stolen Homeland*.

We will meet at 6:00 pm. on Wednesday March 18, 2026, at the Sans Souci West club house at 3231 W. Boone Ave., Spokane, WA. The meeting room will be open at 5:30 pm. Bob Manion will speak about drawing potential readers and customers to your table or booth at craft fairs, book signings, and other similar events.

FROM THE PREZ

Carl had a lot going on as this issue went to press and was unable to provide a message from the president. He hopes to be back next month.
The Prez.



FROM THE VP



Happy St. Patrick's Day

Legends, superstitions, and historical events abound in March. Of course, St. Patrick's Day promises to be celebrated in
SPOKANE AUTHORS LITERARY GAZETTE

Spokane once again with a parade, the wearin' of the green, and imbibing in your favorite beverage at an Irish pub. The yearly question of whether, since this year March came in like a lamb (mild weather), it will go out like a lion (turbulent, blustery, and either rainy or snowy), as weather prognosticators claim every year. One more thing about March is the Ides, March 15th—a really bad day for Caesar but a great one for Brutus.



Back from ancient history. Our Spokane Authors group will meet two days before the Ides of March, on the second Friday the 13th this year. Our guest speaker will be Anna Goodwin. She will share her experiences writing about her father's journey in her book *By Force and Fear: A Stolen Homeland*. The Friday meeting at the Sans Souci West Clubhouse, 3231 West Boone Ave. in Spokane, begins at 2:00 pm, and the room is open at 1:30 for setup and pre-meeting visiting. Our Wednesday evening meeting, added to encourage those unable to attend the Friday meeting and open to all members and those interested, will be at the same location. The room opens at 5:30 p.m., and the meeting begins at 6:00. The general format of the Wednesday meeting will be more like a workshop, with some hands-on exercises, reading, or role-play. This month, Bob Manion will talk about bringing people to your table at a craft fair, book signing, or similar event. For those of you with events scheduled this spring, and for those who would like to improve, this should be a helpful meeting.

The Guy twins, Denise and D. J., have taken over the video recording of our guest speakers and learned how to upload them to the Spokane Authors YouTube channel. They have been working with Dave McChesney and me to make the transition. We are also going to consolidate videos from past speakers into that channel and organize them by date. It will still take a while for that to happen, but so far, the speakers for January and February of this year have been uploaded. Go to <https://www.youtube.com/@SpokaneAuthors-Org>

to access the videos (or click on the link). One more thing I just discovered. If you want subtitles, all you have to do is click the CC button in the bottom-right corner of the screen. One more tip on the videos. It will help us all if you like the video, to hit the thumbs-up icon and subscribe to the channel.

Don't forget to check and follow our Facebook page for more information and the latest on current member activities. Until we meet on Friday the 13th, don't break any mirrors, walk under any ladders, or cross paths with a black cat. Or do all of the aforementioned if you're not prone to superstition. Besides, it will be a lucky month, not just for the Irish, but for all of us Spokane Authors as well.

Sue Eller

FROM YOUR EDITOR, WEB-MASTER, TREASURER

I know you get tired of me ranting about paying dues, and I try to keep mention of it to a minimum. But we are well into the new year and we have a lot of folks on the roster who still haven't paid for 2026. By the end of March or the earlier part of April, we will have to take those not paid off of the MEMBERS page on the website. That means your Member Webpage will no longer be accessible.

We will also be dropping those who last paid in 2023 off the roster and will no longer send those folks the newsletter or other announcements. (We will forward your Member Webpage to you in case you want it for something.



I believe our dues of \$15.00 per year are minimal. When we used to meet at Golden Corral, we'd pay nearly that much each month just to eat, and since buying a meal is no longer required, paying dues for a year should be a very minor inconvenience. If, however, your circumstances are such that paying dues is a problem, please let an officer or board member know, and we'll work

something out.

If you want to pay your dues, you can 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**

Also, please note that the submission's due date has changed from the 25th to the last day of the month for items for the next month's issue of SPOKANE AUTHORS LITERARY GAZETTE. This will be a firmer due date than in the past.

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

OUR NEW CATALOG

It's progressing, although not at the rate I had hoped. Originally it was planned for it to be a yearly thing, but in practical terms it might be something that comes every year and a half or two years.

We want to include books by all our members, but we need to have some sort of eligibility for inclusion in the catalog. Basically, you need to be a current member to have your books included. If you were paid up for 2025 or are paid up for 2026 (or both) we will include your book(s).

If you were last paid in 2024 and had books in the catalog, they will be removed if you are not paid for 2025 or 2026. I have emailed several individuals a number of times but have had no response. If we don't hear from you soon, we will be forced to remove your books from the catalog.

OUR FEBRUARY 2026 MEETINGS

Compiled by Dave McChesney

Friday, February 13th found Spokane Authors meeting at the Sans Souci West Club House. Attending were: Caryl Briscoe-Michas, Joel Craig, Larry Danek, Mary De Bord, Betty Deuber, Gary Edwards, Sue Eller, Mark Lee Golden, Anna Goodwin, Denise Guy, D. J.

Guy, Esther Hildahl, Bob Hildahl, Keven Hostbjor, Joan Kopczynski, Amy Logan, Bob Manion, Dave McChesney, Jon R. Miller, Carl Northrup, Mikel and Mrs. Stevenson, Terry Stratton, and Sarah Vail. Guests included Genny La Morgan, who has since joined, Correen Morrill, Mike Jackson, and Oscar Calhoun.

Carl opened the meeting by reminding everyone to be alert to bogus emails supposedly from him. He also told a joke having to do with “hiring dumb asses in government.” Sue mentioned she was looking for a couple of books that she had inadvertently left on the display table the month before.

Our speaker for the day was Dave McChesney who talked about standard format. Rather than going into the detailed process of putting one’s manuscript in standard format, he offered an explanation of what it is, why we might want to use it, and provided a possible scenario as to how it came to be. He pointed out that if one is dealing with anyone in the traditional writing and publishing industry, those folks normally expected submitted manuscripts to be in standard format. Dave told us that he would send (and has since sent) a copy of his presentation notes and a basic guide to implementing standard format.

Following a break, Larry Danek mentioned he had entered a nationwide short story contest. Terry Stratton told us about his latest writing project. Joan Kopccynski revealed that a review of her latest book had appeared in the March edition of Publisher’s Weekly. She also noted that the reviewer apparently didn’t pick up on the humor of the story and suggested that humor is subjective. Oscar Calhoun introduced himself as a screenwriter.

Carl Northrup reported working with students at a small private school and was working with them to produce an anthology of their work. He is also working to finish and publish *Yank*, as well as progressing with republishing a book his father wrote and published many years ago.

We ended the day by drawing for door prizes. As always, thanks to all who donate books and other items for our drawings.

Spokane Authors also met at Sans Souci West on Wednesday evening, the 18th of February. Present were: Gena Bradford, Caryl Briscoe-Michas, Sue Eller, Denise Guy, D. J. Guy, Genny La Morgan, Bob Manion, Dave McChesney, and Terry Stratton. Kate Collins attended as a guest and has shown interest in becoming a Spokane Authors member.

Michael Murray of the Coeur d’ Alene Writers League was our speaker for the evening and talked about various aspects of writing and being a writer. He suggested we as ourselves why we do what we do, noted that writers often feel unappreciated and should thank ourselves for our efforts. Likewise, he noted we should thank critique readers for pointing out possible problem areas in our work. Michael suggested we become our own cheerleaders.

He also mentioned that we should subject our characters to on-going challenges to make the story more interesting. Further, during the course of his presentation, he had us participate in a character developing exercise.

UPCOMING EVENTS

(Note: INWG’s First Wednesday and Third Wednesday events may be switching times to avoid time conflict with Spokane Author’s Third Wednesday meeting.)

Spokane Authors

Friday, March 13, 2:00 pm
Sans Souci West Clubhouse
Anna Goodwin, writing her father’s Biography,
By Force and Fear: A Stolen Homeland

INWG “Coffee With Linda”

Saturday March 14, 2:00 pm
The Meeting House, 11th and Pittsburg
lindathewriter@gmail.com for info, to RSVP

Spokane Authors

Wednesday March 18, 6:00 pm.
Sans Souci West Clubhouse
Bob Manion, attracting people at craft fairs,
book signings

Inland Northwest Writers Guild
Wednesday March 18, 7:00 pm (ZOOM)
Contact lindathewriter@gmail.com for link

The Being Real and Banned Book Club
Saturday March 28, 2:00 pm
The Meeting House, 11th and Pittsburg
lindathewriter@gmail.com for info, to RSVP

INWG First Wednesday
Wednesday April 1, 2:00 pm (ZOOM) Contact
lindathewriter@gmail.com For link

Spokane Authors
Friday, April 10, 2:00 pm
Sans Souci West Clubhouse

INWG "Coffee With Linda"
Saturday April 11, 2:00 pm
The Meeting House, 11th and Pittsburg
lindathewriter@gmail.com for info, to RSVP

Spokane Authors
Wednesday April 15, 6:00 pm.
Sans Souci West Clubhouse
General Discussion

Inland Northwest Writers Guild
Wednesday April 15, 7:00 pm (ZOOM)
Contact lindathewriter@gmail.com for link

The Being Real and Banned Book Club
Saturday April 25, 2:00 pm
The Meeting House, 11th and Pittsburg
lindathewriter@gmail.com for info, to RSVP

INWG First Wednesday
Wednesday May 6, 2:00 pm (ZOOM) Contact
lindathewriter@gmail.com For link

Spokane Authors
Friday, May 8, 2:00 pm
Sans Souci West Clubhouse

INWG "Coffee With Linda"
Saturday May 9, 2:00 pm
The Meeting House, 11th and Pittsburg
lindathewriter@gmail.com for info, to RSVP

**Write Local, Publish Smart: A
Spokane Authors Learning
Showcase**
**An Educational Writing and
Publishing Program in Cooperation
with the
Northwest Museum of Arts and
Culture, Spokane**

Location: MAC Auditorium—E.A. Johnson, 2316
W. 1st Ave., #100, Spokane, WA 99201

Date: Saturday, May 16, 2026

Time: 10:00 a.m.—2:00 p.m.

Duration: 4 Hours

Cost: Free

Venue: MAC Auditorium & Helen South
Alexander Gallery

About the Program

Join the **Museum of Arts and Culture (MAC)** and **Spokane Authors** for an engaging educational showcase designed for readers, writers, and aspiring authors of all experience levels. This free program highlights practical knowledge, creative insight, and real-world guidance from accomplished local authors.

Morning 10:00 a.m.—12:00 p.m.

10:00–10:15	Nathaniel Bennett—Getting Started in Creative Writing
10:20–10:35	Elena Smith—From Idea to Impact: Writing, Publishing, and Promoting Your Book, and the Role of AI in This Process
10:40–10:55	Sue Eller—Assembling Your Writing Team
11:00–11:15	Gail Bergan—Writing Memoir: Guidelines and Guardrails While Telling Our Truths
11:20–11:35	Sarah Vail—Adding Emotion, Body Language, and Inner Thoughts to Develop Empathetic and Relatable Characters.
11:35–12:00	Q&A

Afternoon 12:00 p.m.—2:00 p.m.—Meet and mingle with your presenters and

**other members of Spokane Authors.
Enjoy a rare opportunity to purchase
signed copies of their books.**

Following the presentations and Q&A, the presenters will be available to:

- Demonstrate their work
- Discuss writing and publishing experiences
- Sell and sign their books

Who Should Attend

If you enjoy reading, are curious about writing, or want to publish your own book but aren't sure where to start, **this event is for you.**

Spokane Authors

Wednesday May 20, 6:00 pm.
Sans Souci West Clubhouse
General Discussion

Inland Northwest Writers Guild

Wednesday May 20, 7:00 pm (ZOOM)
Contact lindathewriter@gmail.com for link

The Being Real and Banned Book Club

Saturday May 23, 2:00 pm
The Meeting House, 11th and Pittsburg
lindathewriter@gmail.com for info, to RSVP

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/)

Connie Kerbs

Paths of Fear B017Z1EQT8 0996966110
Whatsoever Things B07L8J8QK7 099696617X
A Season for All things 1736741926
What is a Camel? B091DFCCQG 0996966196
The Giraffe Gaffe 173674190X

T. Hammond

Blind Seduction: Team Red, Book 1 B00C8UB0JK
Color Blind: Team Red, Book 2 B00E652OTK
Blind Faith: Team Red, Book 3 B00H8IH80W
Blind Rage: Team Red, Book 4 B00KCDLN06
Blind-sided: Team Red, Book 5 B00PE9YOVI
Blind Luck: Team Red, Book 6 B00WW64CR2
Team Red: Omnibus 1 (Books 1 – 3) B00HI50VAY
Team Red: Omnibus 2 (Books 4 – 6) B019LS2VOS
Posse: Duoviri B01D3EK5NQ
Posse: Legends B075DFSGJ1

Michael Zargona

Turn Red Tomorrow 1092144404 B07Q7TNLTC B0914WWCYS
Sixteen Hooves Thunder B08LJPKCM2 B08LHK5PKF B0194PW7RV
The Sunset of All Sorrows B0CQ2P6SCV B0CPLHSY8R B0CQ87THCL

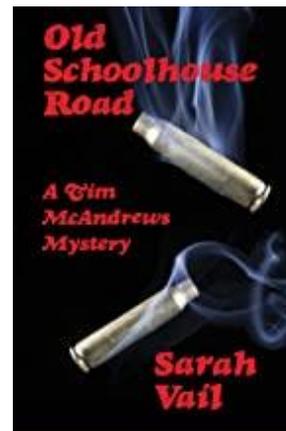
Mark Carter (Editor)

Spokane Then and Now (Photos by Byron D. King) 0970822766
Dear Old Nat... Spokane's Playground (By Marie L. Hyder and Donald R. Johnson) 0970822758

Z. Martin Brown

The Nonessentials B0CN4BY2TQ B0CN44GSXX
The Nonessentials II B0DXKFCMLB B0DXD73DWK

FEATURED BOOK REVIEWS



Reviewed by Kevin Hostbjor

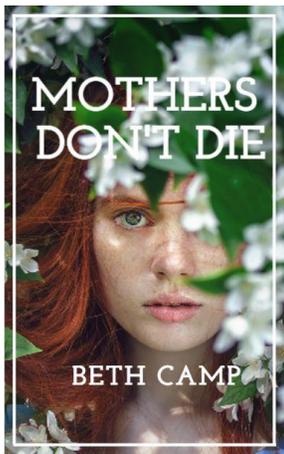
This is a well-researched and written novel. Sarah Vail grabs the reader from the first sentence with a timely school shooting,

capturing the fears and terrors of today's unfortunate environment. The ongoing crime story contains twists and turns and surprised this astute (I thought I was anyway) reader right at the end with yet another twist. How wonderful. Highly recommended.

Reviewed by Larry Danek (New)

I enjoyed reading this book. It has that turn your stomach feel when you realize the background is so authentic. The story builds tension and draws you in with every chapter.

It's one of those hard to put down books. I started it too late in the day to finish it and jumped back on it the first thing in the morning. Even skipped my paper's comic section till after I finished the book.



Reviewed by Sandra Mason

Master storyteller, Beth Camp's *Mothers Don't Die*, took me way out of my usual wheelhouse of reading choices. She scared the spit out of me in the first two chapters and throughout the book. The story is fast paced, with plot twists and turns that kept me turning pages, and thinking, *what would I do in a similar situation?*

A family goes camping, sets up camp and takes a walk when the father finds something so chilling that he wants to take the whole family with him to report the crime. The little daughter is asleep, and the mother does not want to wake her. The scene is set for disaster.

Beth's characters are vivid, believable, and real. I could NOT put the book down. I

read most of the book in one day, then forced myself to wait to finish it the next day. I was breathless through most of it, hating the villain, frustrated with the police, and the husband, and hoping the wife would somehow escape with her child.

If you like reading thrillers, this book is for you! I don't normally choose thrillers, and I could NOT put this down. Check out Beth's other books. The McDonald Series and her art crimes mysteries. Beth writes strong women characters who overcome the challenges they face. Her characters are believable.

Reviewed by Joan Kopczynski

Mothers Don't Die is a quick and suspenseful read at 171 pages. The author had me hooked in the short prologue where we witness the antagonist, Donald, sitting by a woman's body on the bottom stair in the basement and we are introduced to his unhealthy obsession with his mother.

The book loses a little steam in the first chapter about Ron, Laura and their five-year-old daughter, Kerry, camping in eastern Washington but picks up at the end of the chapter where there is another hook. (Ron, the protagonist's (Laura's) husband finds a dark rock in the center of the road which turns out to be a body wrapped in a large plastic trash bag.) A detective, Greg Matheson, is soon assigned to the case.

The protagonist and antagonist meet in Chapter Six when the suspense ratchets up a notch. The reader wonders, is Donald a kidnapper? A rapist? A murderer? Maybe a serial killer? Read on to find out.

The author has done an excellent job in researching such a crime. It reminded me a lot of the shows on Dateline, plenty of suspense, an exploration of the darker side of human nature and a satisfying ending where justice prevails. There is also a satisfying love story in the subplot.

She also does an excellent job with realistic dialogue and offers vivid settings in both the campground in eastern Washington and also Seattle where a lot of the story takes place.

Mothers Don't Die, in my opinion, is an excellent crime fiction novel, but I don't feel

that it has all elements of a psychological thriller. I also felt this book would be better if it had gone through a professional line edit before it was published. (The author is revising it now.)

The book is a page turner. You'll have difficulty putting it down once you start reading it. Don't count on sleeping until you've finished. I highly recommend it.

Mountain Secrets
(Sorry, no cover image is available)
By Joyce Nowacki

Reviewed by Bob Weldin

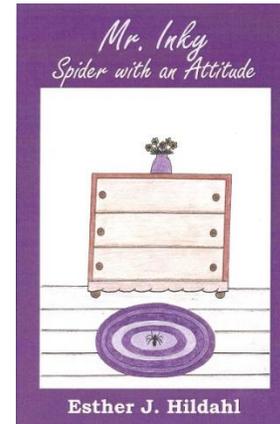
The setting for Mountain Secrets is Rathdrum, Idaho and vicinity, prior to and during the early days of Prohibition, 1919 and 1920. A young woman is on the run from cops and Chicago mobsters, carrying secrets and a satchel of money. She rides the trains, changing her name and destination frequently, until she ends up at Rathdrum. She meets Ralph, the bartender, and becomes a popular singer at his bar until she is recognized by a mysterious stranger. Ralph hooks her up with moonshiners who take her to their mountain hide away. The locals conspire against the laws of Federal Prohibition. There is a mysterious murder and the young woman's secrets are found out.

The author does a good job of describing the characters and the physical surroundings. Likewise, she does a good job of distinguishing the hickish drawls of moonshiners from the slicksters from Spokane, Seattle, and Chicago. The story is a quick enjoyable read, but my wife and I agree that the sudden conclusion left us with many unanswered questions. However, that seems to be the modern trend for novels... maybe that's the setup for a sequel.

Mountain Secrets is Joyce Nowacki's third novel. She writes historical fiction, combining historical periods with places where she grew up in North Idaho. I look forward to reading her first two novels: *The Other Side of the Fence*, 2010, which is an historical novel about Chinese immigrants, and *The Magic of*

Ordinary Times, 2012, which is about growing up in North Idaho during the 1950s,

From Write Offsite Publishing, 2018,
211 pages



Reviewed by Kate Poitevin

I must admit that I spent most of my life terrified of spiders. I never killed them, I just jumped on a chair and yelled for someone else to come and do the deed. At some point, well into my adult years, I realized their worth and turned to 'catch and release': much to the dismay of my grandchildren.

Now that I have read Mr. Inky, I'm so glad that I don't have the blood of innocent crawly creatures on my hands.

Ms. Hildahl tells a delightful tale about the budding relationship between ten-year-old Victoria and her unexpected 'roommate.' But wait, it's not just about that! Hidden in the story are lessons about things like not judging others who are different, there just might be a wonderful friend inside. It addresses the topic of bullying, and teachers and parents not really listening to their children and how it makes the child feel. It touches on the angst of the everyday fifth grader in a touching and respectful way. There is even a stinky brother, (a subject dear to my heart, having one of my own). It is full of great characters, found in every school, and artfully woven into the tale.

It is a perfect read for fifth and sixth graders and this grandma can attest to the fact that it is fun to read to younger ones. I'm sure that the lives of countless creepy-crawlies will be saved as the children learn that all

creatures have a place in our world and should be left to do their jobs.

Reviewed by Sue Eller

The last thing 10-year-old Victoria Wyatt wanted to find in her bedroom was a spider. How did Victoria go from wanting to squish it with her flip-flop to wanting to protect it against the classroom bully? Author Esther Hildahl spins a tale of a most unlikely friendship and leaves the reader with a whole new perspective on spiders – especially talking ones. A delightful chapter book that I highly recommend to children of all ages. *Mr. Inky, Spider with an Attitude* is available at the Hastings Book Stores in Spokane, Washington and at Auntie's Bookstore, also in Spokane.

Reviewed by Joyce Caudel

Vicki Wyatt is a normal ten year old except for the fact she shares her bedroom with a spider. A spider that talks!

Vicki tells her family the spider talks, of course, they do not believe her. She must be imagining things. Vicki's brother, Neal, teases her and tells some of the boys at school about Vicki's 'talking spider'. Vicki gets into a fight on the playground, with the meanest kid in school. They both get sent to the principal.

The real excitement begins when Mr. Inky agrees to go to school, in a glass jar, for Vicki's science project. Since no one believes her, she tells the class her spider is just an ordinary house spider. The meanest kid in school calls Vicki a liar. Mr. Inky can't help himself and with a booming voice lets the class know he is really a talking spider. Mr. Inky escapes and chaos breaks out as the whole school searches for him.

I found *Mr. Inky: Spider with an Attitude* by Esther J. Hildahl to be a delightful story any child will love to read or have read to them. The characters seemed very real to me and brought back memories of my childhood on the playground. I'm going to think twice before squashing another spider.

Reviewed by D. Andrew McChesney

Vicky Wyatt's reaction when she sees a spider in her room is natural. She's going to kill it. However, this spider is unusual and in order to save his life, reveals to Vicky that he can talk. His gamble pays off and he is spared. Mr. Inky, as he is later named develops a sometimes-cantankerous relationship with Vicky.

Larger problems result for the fifth grader because no one believes her story about a talking spider. She eventually has to see the school counselor and, in an attempt, to calm things down says she made the whole thing up. But when she takes Mr. Inky to school for a science project, things get out of hand and Mr. Inky is forced to speak in front of the entire class in order to protect Vicky.

This was a fun read, a book that while written for elementary school age readers, is entertaining for those of any age. Most notable is the way in which the author captures the feel of being in the fifth grade. That brought back a number of memories, and in itself recommends this book for all.

Mr. Inky: Spider with an Attitude is available in several Spokane area bookstores.

(Reviews of *Mr. Inky: Spyder with an Attitude* will continue next month.)