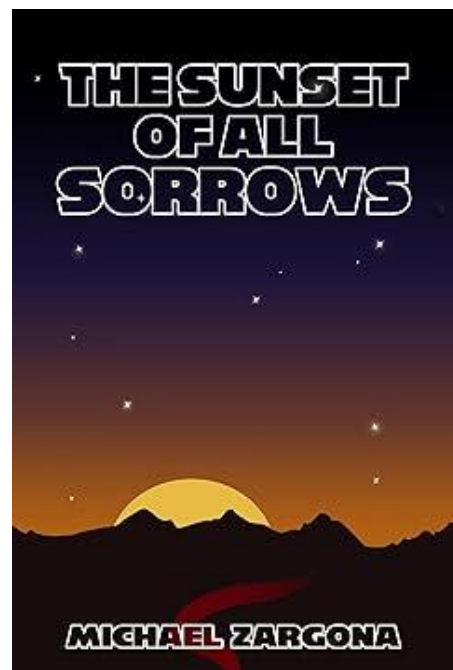




Literary Gazette

November 2025

Spokane Authors
P. O. Box 18573
Spokane, WA 99228-0573



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, SASP is an organization dedicated to anyone interested in any aspect of writing and art. Members include aspiring (and successful) authors, poets, journalists, illustrators, editors, publishers, printers, 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.

Presentations and discussions begin at **2:00 pm**. Members and guests also have a chance to relate accomplishments and note upcoming activities. We usually draw for door prizes.

Spokane Authors also meets the **third Saturday** of each month in the social hall of **St. Francis of Assisi Church**, 1104 W. Heroy Ave., Spokane. (**Saturday meetings are cancelled for November and December of 2025**)

Meetings begin at **2:00 pm**. We must be out of the room and building by **4:00 pm**.

We often provide refreshments such as bottled water, cake, or cookies. We set up a collection jar for those who wish to help reimburse whoever brings such 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 by:
November 25th for the December
2025 issue.**

2025 Officers:

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

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

Secretary: **OPEN**

Treasurer, Newsletter Editor, and Web Master:
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Advisory Board:

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

Member: **Bob Weldin**
(509) 514-2747 minersquest@comcast.net

"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 to newer/current videos can be found in the Vice-President's messages in this newsletter, as well as accounts of our most recent meetings

On the cover: Turn Red Tomorrow, Sixteen Hooves Thunder, and The Sunset of all Sorrows, by a Spokane Authors member who writes as Michael Zargona..

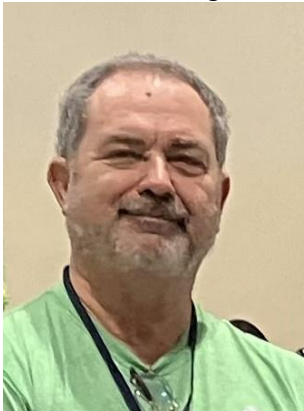
OUR NOVEMBER MEETINGS!

We will meet at 2:00 pm. on Friday, November 14, 2025, at the San Souci West Club House, 3231 W. Boone Ave., Spokane, WA. Fellow Spokane Authors member Dave McChesney will talk about creating character names and more. We will also hold elections for the coming year.

We will not meet on the third Saturday of the month in either November or December. We will resume Saturday meetings in January 2026. If the location for that meeting changes, we will let you know.

FROM THE PREZ

I had a great time at the Central Valley



Craft Fair with Dave and Nadia. Saw lots of old friends and made some new ones. One of my new friends is a lawyer, so I will keep this brief.

We will have elections coming up this Friday. We still need a secretary to take meeting notes, so

if you would like to volunteer, we will put you on the ballot.

It has been raining quite a bit here, way up North, and I am feeling under it, but I think the worst is over. Both rain and feeling under the weather.

As always, looking forward to seeing everyone again.

The Prez,

Nathan/Carl

FROM THE VP An Attitude of Gratitude

To me Thanksgiving is a time to reflect on all the things in front of me for which I am grateful. I love our group and the things we have accomplished over the years since the

group was founded. We came through the Covid-19 shutdown like the proverbial phoenix rising from the ashes. In our first public meeting after everything opened up again, there were eight people in attendance. We have grown so much since then, and as the old merges with the new, I am thankful for each and every one of you and your contributions.

The craft fair fall season is in full swing, with events extending into December for some of us. It has been a good year for me, with returning customers and more new people discovering my books.



I'm sure many of you have experienced good things as well.

I hope some of you have had time to take advantage of the free online conference hosted by the Alliance of Independent Authors, which took place October 18-19, 2025. Let me know what you think, and how or why it was helpful, if it was.

The October video featuring guest speaker Sarah Vail is live, and the link is <https://youtu.be/X5R9Tt2YT1c>. I am hosting the videos on my personal YouTube channel, and all SA speaker videos are set to Public. This month, we have subtitles as well. I'm still honing my video-taking and editing skills, so bear with me while I produce the best videos I can.

For November, member Dave McChesney will speak on a topic to be determined, and in December, be prepared to share from your latest work or work in progress, or a December-themed composition of your own, for our open mike session. November is also your opportunity to vote for next year's officers. I'm also working on January of next year and will let you know further details as I get them scheduled.

I hope to see many of you at the November 14th meeting in the clubhouse at Sans Souci West mobile home park, 3231 West Boone Avenue in Spokane, Washington. The meeting begins at 2:00 pm, and the room

is open at 1:30 for setup and pre-meeting visiting. For this November and December, we will not be having a Saturday meeting. And don't forget to cast your votes for next year's officers.

In the meantime, I hope you enjoy our meeting venue, our speakers, and the camaraderie of our group. Be sure to let your friends and fellow authors know about our meetings and, of course, continue writing and sharing your accomplishments and plans with the group.

Sue Eller

FROM YOUR EDITOR, WEB-MASTER, TREASURER

So, I'm trying to get to work on the next edition of our catalog, but I keep getting distracted. I will get to it one of these days and hopefully have it available later this month. Looks like there are a few authors and books to add, as well as a few to remove as those respective authors are not current in dues. Honestly, I think I've sent enough reminders.

I'm currently learning new email systems. As noted, I've created a "gmail" account for Spokane Authors to serve as our official email. Additionally, my old personal email account was moved to Yahoo, so I'm



trying to adjust to that as well. (My address is still the same, in case you are wondering.) A lot of it is that I was used to things working a certain way, and now things work differently. I just need to get used to and understand the changes.

We will be holding elections at our Friday meeting this month. If you are a member, a ballot will be included with this issue of SPOKANE AUTHORS LITERARY GAZETTE. You can return it via e-mail, USPS, if you think it will arrive in time, or you can bring it to the meeting

to be counted. Please note, you must be a currently paid member for your vote to count. You can pay at the meeting or let me know you've sent payment to our Post Office Box.

Speaking which, after the first of the year we'll close the box and use my street address for a mailing address.

As always, you can send dues to:

Spokane Authors

P. O. Box 18573

Spokane, WA 99228-0573

Or bring cash or check to a meeting. (If I remember to bring my "Square," you can charge your dues to a card.)

ELECTIONS COMING SOON!

We have at least one person or persons nominated for all positions except that of Secretary. If you would like to serve in that capacity, let us know and we can elect you to the position by acclaim.

OUR OCTOBER 2025 MEETINGS

Compiled by Dave McChesney

Spokane Authors met on Friday, October 10th at the Sans Souci West Club House. Members present included Caryl Briscoe-Michas, Joel Craig, Larry Danek, Mary DeBord, Gary Edwards, Carolyn Eller, Sue Eller, Mark Lee Golden, Denise Guy, D. J. Guy, Esther Hildahl, Bob Hildahl, Steve Lalonde, Amy Logan, Bob Manion, Dave McChesney, Carl Northrup, Elena Smith, Linda Sonntag, Terry Stratton, and Sarah Vail. There were no visitors or guests according to the sign in sheet. (Apologies if you attended as a member or as a guest and were not acknowledged as having been there. Memory suggests there may have been more in attendance than those listed above, but records indicate these were the folks present.)

As is standard procedure, President Carl Northrup introduced Vice President Sue

Eller, who in turn introduced our speaker. Fellow member of Spokane Authors Sarah Vail's presentation was "Writing an Engaging Fiction Scene." She began by talking about points of view, *first person* and *third person*, both *close* and *omniscient*. She suggested that while possible, it would be extremely difficult to write in *second person*. Sarah also spoke about how much a viewpoint character could know, with first person and close third person being the most restricted.

She also passed out an information sheet, which had a participant exercise on it. Based on very basic information, we were to flesh out a conversation between two people. Several participants read their results to the group.

Debby Putman told us about her new book, *The Swedish Elf*, which is for children from 11 to 13 years of age. She also noted differences in quality, cover color, and more, depending upon where the books were sourced, Amazon or Draft to Digital.

Upcoming Arts and Craft Fairs were announced, including Mt. Spokane High School that coming weekend. Chattaroy Community Church would be Saturday the 25th Of October, and Stratton Elementary School would be on Saturday December 6th.

Sue is looking for a Beta Reader for the late Marilee Hudon's last (third) book. Her husband hopes to publish it on her behalf.

We will hold elections in November. The following have volunteered or have been nominated to run: President, Carl Northrup (incumbent): Vice-President, Sue Eller (incumbent): Secretary, position is open and available: Treasurer, Dave McChesney (incumbent): Public Relations, D. J. and Denise Guy: Advisory Board Members (three positions) Caryl Briscoe-Michas, Debby Putman, and Mary De Bord (incumbent).

Please note, ballots will go out with the November Edition of SPOKANE AUTHORS LITERARY GAZETTE. You can vote and return them via e-mail, USPS, or bring them to our November meeting. You must be a current paid member for our vote to count. Yes, you can pay when you turn your ballot in.

Here is the link to the video of our Friday October 10th meeting.

<https://youtu.be/X5R9Tt2YT1c>.

(It is also in this month's message from our Vice President.)

Spokane Authors also met on Saturday October 18, 2025, at the St. Francis of Assisi Social Hall. In attendance were Carl Northrup, Bob Manion, Terry Stratton, and Dave McChesney. We talked in general about publishing and educating members. We agreed that we should put more emphasis in "how to." It was also suggested that the Spokane Authors Speakers Bureau should be revived and brought to the attention of newer members and the public.

As often happens at our Saturday meetings, discussion veered towards topics having little to do with writing, publishing or marketing. This time we ended up talking about firearms.

Finally, we decided we had been there long enough, realized that no one else was coming, packed our stuff up and went home, or to our next destination.

Please note we will not meet on the third Saturday of November or December. We will resume our Saturday meetings in January, and if our location should change, we'll let everyone know.

CONGRATULATIONS!

To Spokane Authors member Elena S. Smith, whose book, ***Truth and Lies*** recently received a BookFest Award, placing third in the Literary Fiction Drama category.

UPCOMING EVENTS

INWG Coffee with Linda

Saturday November 8, 2:00 pm
The Meeting House, 11th and Pittsburg,
RSVP at lindathewriter@gmail.com

Spokane Authors

Friday November 14, 2:00 pm
Sans Souci West Club House
Speaker: Dave McChesney

Spokane Authors

Saturday November 15, 2:00 pm
St. Francis of Assisi Social Hall
CANCELLED

Shadle Park HS Arts and Craft Fair

Saturday & Sunday, November 15 & 16.

Deer Park HS Arts and Craft Fair

Saturday, November 15

Inland Northwest Writers Guild

Wednesday 19 November, 7:00 pm (ZOOM)
Contact lindathewriter@gmail.com for link

INWG First Wednesday

Wednesday December 3, 2:00 pm (ZOOM)
Contact lindathewriter@gmail.com For link
(INWG will take the rest of December off.)

Ridgeline HS Arts and Craft Fair

Saturday & Sunday, December 6 & 7

Stratton Elementary Arts and Craft Fair

(Newport, WA)
Saturday, December 6

Spokane Authors

Friday December 12, 2:00 pm
Sans Souci West Club House
Our Annual Open Mic Session

Spokane Authors

Saturday December 20, 2:00 pm
St. Francis of Assisi Social Hall
CANCELLED

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

SPOKANE AUTHORS LITERARY GAZETTE

and/or Kindle™ (We print short parts of the list
on a rotating basis. The complete list 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/)

J. B. Rivard

Illusions of Magic: Love and Intrigue in 1933
Chicago B01EGSC8N8 0996836306
Illusions of Magic: The Movie
B0751RL53G 0996836330
Low on Gas: High on Sky
B07V2V48XD 0996836349
Dead Heat to Destiny: Three Lives and a Spy
0996836365 B0BL5P29YP

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 B094TCDGZG
The Psychic Ghost: A Story of the Nomadic
Ghost B0CW1FW81C B0CW3FP2Y2
Seven Down B0DXQJB NV4 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 B019NGA00Q 159849175X
Re-Ring B01IRW4XVY

FEATURED BOOK REVIEWS

This month we have one new review for a
book that fits within our normal rotation.

Mountain Secrets

(Sorry, no cover image available)

By Joyce Nowacki

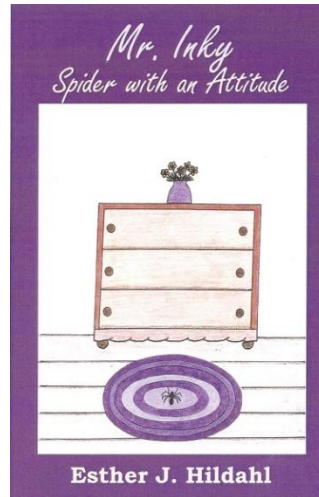
Reviewed by Bob Weldin

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



By Esther J. Hildahl

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 feeling 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.

Reviewed by *Northern Dawn Awards*

When ten-year-old Vicki Wyatt finds a house spider in her bedroom, her first instinct is to kill it. Perturbed Mr. Inky, the spider, tells Vicki to spare his life. He wants to continue living under the dresser. After all, it's his home, too.

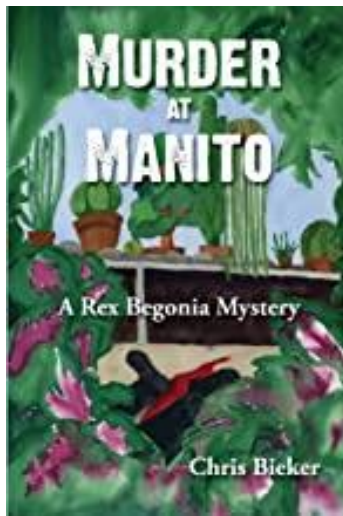
At first Vicky is not happy with this new arrangement. What if Mr. Inky bites her?

However, when Mr. Inky goes missing, she changes her tune. When he comes back, she realizes it's pretty cool having him around, even if he does have bad grammar.

Then disaster strikes when her brother tells the whole school that Vicki thinks she has a talking spider living in her bedroom. As a result, she is excluded, teased, and even sent to the school counselor.

Later, Mr. Inky reluctantly agrees to go to school as part of Vicki's science project. Will he survive Rory Picklebok, the meanest kid in the fifth grade? And what happens when his secret is discovered?

Hildahl's nineteen years of teaching has served her well, as she clearly knows the minds and concerns of the middle-school crowd. Preteens will clamor for Mr. Inky: Spider with an Attitude because it's a whole lot of fun. Parents will also appreciate that it is well-executed and a clean read.



By Chris Bieker

Reviewed by Esther
J. Hildahl

Murder at Manito begins when Bill England, Manito Park's head gardener, is found murdered in the greenhouse. He was very charming and popular with the

public, but as the story unfolds, the reader discovers he is a bit of a cad and has enemies in the gardening world.

Since the Lilac Parade is coming up soon, the mayor wants this murder to be solved quickly. Thus, Chief Detective Rex Begonia and his new partner, Ivy Lizei, arrive on the scene. Through numerous cups of coffee and good detective work, they eventually solve this crime and capture the murderer in a very dramatic way.

Local writer Chris Bieker has written a page turning murder mystery with a surprise ending. I liked the creative names she gave to some of her characters. I liked that the story took place in Spokane in my favorite park, and that she wrote about the goings on of the various garden clubs and the Lilac Parade. If you like mysteries, this book is for you. It's a good read.



By Kevin Hostbjoer

Reviewed by Elena S.
Smith

I once went book shopping with a friend who had an unusual method for choosing her reads. She would flip straight to page 78, read a few lines, and then decide whether the book was worth

buying. "It never fails," she told me. Perhaps that's a clever trick for most books—but *The Musher Man* is an exception. You don't need to wait until page 78 to know it's extraordinary; the strength of Kevin's storytelling is evident from the very first page.

Kevin is a master of suspense and tension, drawing the reader in with prose that is both gripping and intelligent. What impressed me most, however, was his remarkable use of perspective. By allowing each chapter to be told through a different character's eyes in the first person, he creates an intimate connection with the reader—bringing to life not only the characters' voices, but also their emotions and inner worlds. This is the mark of a writer with rare empathy and skill, one who can translate human experience directly from his imagination onto the page.

The story itself is clever, layered, and wholly engrossing. I found myself utterly absorbed, unable to set it down until the final page. Kevin has delivered a novel that is not just a page-turner, but a testament to his talent as a writer. Bravo, Kevin—*The Musher Man* is a triumph.

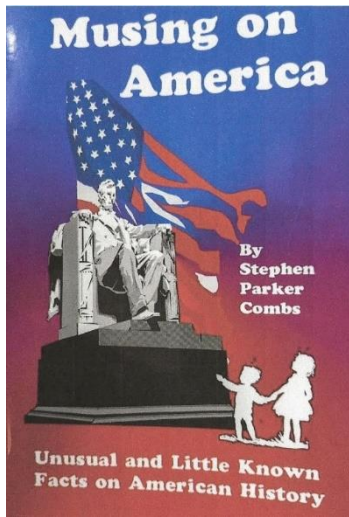
Reviewed by Esther J. Hildahl
(New Review)

The Musher Man begins with Denny, a Marine, coming home four years after the worst day of his life. He is part Haitian American like his mother and part Kootenai Indian like his deceased Marine father. Denny and his mother live in the Montana woods where his mother sets up shop in the large kitchen of an old farm house, selling her voodoo concoctions, mostly to women in the area. Denny has a dog sled and loves his nine dogs, especially his lead dog Pixie.

The author lets each character, including a serial killer and his victims, tell their own story as it relates to the main story, which is very creative and the reader gets to know each of these characters well.

This is a good read. It is well-written and has a satisfying ending. I recommend this book for one and all, especially if you like to read about Montana, dog sledding, the Marines, a

plane crash, and much more. Plus, it has a great cover.



By Stephen Parker
Combs

Reviewed by Esther
J. Hildahl

I love this book and use it as a game to see how many of my friends and relatives know the answer to unusual and little-known facts in American history.

Examples: Daniel Boone died from indigestion from his favorite food. What was it? Answer—sweet potatoes. What was the original color of the White House? Answer—gray. Who said, “Opportunity is often missed by most people because it is dressed in overalls and looks like work.”? Answer—Thomas Edison. *Musing on America* has over a hundred such questions, answers, and facts in this book of 110 pages.

The author has written many small, interesting books on many topics. The books are all well written and I have purchased several over the last few years. I have given copies of two of his books, *Saying Goodbye* and *Nearing the Shoreline*, as gifts. Combs can usually be found at the Annual Chattaroy Community Church Craft Fair.