

## Letters to Our Community

Guidelines for letters are on page 31.

**Disclaimer:** The information and opinions expressed in Letters to Our Community are the responsibility of the letter writers and should not be interpreted as the views of OCN even if the letter writer is an OCN volunteer. The letters this month are arranged in alphabetical order based on the letter-writer's last name.

### Show my dead body

If I die in a mass shooting, show a photo of me lying on the ground. Hair splayed on the concrete, store floor, or theater carpet. Legs crossed in an unimaginable position. Me, crumpled, like a rag doll, lifeless, where there once was a lively, dynamic, smiling woman.

Show my purse spilled out, with my lipstick on the ground. My keys in my hand. My shopping list in

my cart. Maybe that will resonate. Maybe some woman will have that same lipstick, and think, she's like me. I have that lipstick. I too was on my way to the store. I too made a shopping list. I too needed bread and milk.

So, please show my dead body, you have my full permission to do so.

Why?

Because maybe, just maybe, seeing people who have been slaughtered will have some kind of impact that hasn't commanded change thus far.

Maybe seeing my blood, my brains, my crumpled body will be the change we need. Right now, after a shooting, we may see a body, far away, with a blurred-out face. But we don't see how they were mowed

down, what is left of them, how they departed this world—those 20 6-and 7-year-olds, those theatergoers, those high school students, we don't see them dead.

If we show the carnage, the blood, the guts, and the out-and-out horrendous scene, maybe it will resonate. Maybe we can start to have common-sense gun laws and affordable and attainable mental health services. Because we need both. One is not more important than the other. Sensible gun laws are not a slippery slope. Mental health does not answer all. Both are needed.

So, show my picture. Maybe it can start a change.

**Name withheld upon request**

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### Between the Covers at Covered Treasures Bookstore

## Timeless treasures

By the staff at  
Covered Treasures

"If you would tell me the heart of  
a man, tell me not what he reads,  
but what he re-reads."

—Francois Mauriac

For us, these are timeless, meaningful books to read, re-read, and share with generations. We'd love to hear about some of yours!



*The Bookworm*  
by Carl Spitzweg

**Tommie's favorites include:**  
**To Kill a Mockingbird**  
By Harper Lee (*Harper Perennial*)  
\$15.99

Harper Lee's Pulitzer Prize-winning masterwork is one of the most cherished stories of all time. A gripping tale of the Deep South through the eyes of a young girl as her father, a crusading local lawyer, risks everything to defend a black man unjustly accused of a terrible crime. Tommie loves the multiple stories and lessons of this book, summed up by the wisdom of Atticus, the father: "You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view. ... Until you climb inside of his skin and walk around in it."

### **The Poisonwood Bible**

By Barbara Kingsolver (*Harper Perennial*) \$18.99

Kingsolver's national bestseller paints an intimate portrait of a crisis-ridden family amid the larger backdrop of an African nation in chaos. Tommie particularly appreciates Barbara Kingsolver's use of language in this book; her use of tone, word choices, and literary devices, to bring the characters and the Congo to life.

### **The BFG**

By Roald Dahl (*Puffin Books*) \$7.99

The Big Friendly Giant is one of Roald Dahl's most lovable characters. Whether galloping off with Sophie; speaking his delightful, jumbled, squib-fangled patois; or whizzpopping for the queen, he leaves an indelible impression of bigheartedness. The blending of silliness with a moral message is what makes this one of Tommie's favorite children's books.

### **Paula's favorites include:**

#### **East of Eden**

By John Steinbeck (*Penguin Books*) \$18

This masterpiece of Steinbeck's later years is a work in which he created his most mesmerizing characters and explored his most enduring themes. Paula enjoys how Steinbeck brings together the human heart and the land— isolation, loneliness, and even failure. Characters are real and relatable as they embrace life with compassion, humility, and spirit.

#### **Little House in the Big Woods**

By Laura Ingalls Wilder (*Harper Collins*) \$8.99

Anything by Laura Ingalls Wilder is wonderful, but her Little House on the Prairie Series has stood the test of time and tells the story of Laura's real childhood as an American pioneer. Paula notes that these stories teach children about a simple, rustic life, friendship, beauty, quiet moments, and a strong work ethic.

#### **Misty of Chincoteague**

By Marguerite Henry (*Aladdin Paperbacks*) \$7.99

This Newbery Honor Book is set on an island off the coasts of Virginia and Maryland where a band of wild ponies has lived for centuries. It focuses on a mare, Phantom, and her colt, Misty. Paula enjoys Marguerite Henry's books because they have historical authenticity and are suspenseful stories about real horses; visiting Chincoteague is on her bucket list.

### **Pam's favorites include:**

#### **The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe**

By C.S. Lewis (*HarperCollins*) \$8.99

This is the second book in the classic fantasy series *The Chronicles of Narnia* that has been drawing readers of all ages for over 60 years. Four adventurous siblings step through a wardrobe door and into the land of Narnia. Pam discovered the series as a child and has re-read it many times. Full of great adventure, mythical beasts, and talking animals, this series transports the reader to a land where magic meets reality and good conquers evil.

#### **The Phantom Tollbooth**

By Norton Juster (*Yearling Classic*) \$8.99

For Milo, everything's a bore until a tollbooth mysteriously appears in his room. Somewhere along the way, Milo realizes life is exciting beyond his wildest dreams! Pam's favorite things are the wordplay, puns, paradoxes, and problem-solving adventures. She says it's just as much for adults as kids with its encouraging deeper messages. One of her favorite quotes is, "So many things are possible just as long as you don't know they're impossible."

#### **The Splendid and the Vile: A Saga of Churchill, Family, and Defiance During the Blitz**

By Erik Larson (*Crown Publishing*) \$32

Erik Larson brings history to life once again, this time in an intimate portrait of Churchill: his strengths and weaknesses, triumph over tragedy, and his leadership during London's darkest year. Pam is a fan of Erik Larson not only because of his thorough research, but for his talent of writing nonfiction that reads like novels.

Until next month, happy reading.

Tommie, Paula, and Pam can be  
contacted at [books@ocn.me](mailto:books@ocn.me).

### April Library Events

## Library offers printing of tax forms, other services

By Harriet Halbig

State and federal tax forms are available on the library website, [ppld.org](http://ppld.org), under Tax Time. You can print them at home or come into the library and we will do it for you. With the name of the correct form and your library card, you can get 10 pages printed free each day.

Patrons continue to be invited into the library to browse the collection and stay a brief time to read newspapers or charge devices.

The meeting rooms remain closed and all in-person programs cancelled until further notice, but story times and toddler times are available online. A new program for each is offered each week, and previous programs are still available.

Masks continue to be required for all patrons ages 3 and up, and social distancing is required as well.

Curbside service for claiming holds and inter-library loans will be available indefinitely. Call 488-2370 before you come and your items will be ready

when you arrive, or come by and ring the doorbell on the shelf by the door and we will come to you.

Current hours at the Monument Library are 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Thursday, and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Friday and Saturday. The library is closed on Sundays.

We hope to see you soon at the library.

Harriet Halbig can be reached at  
[harriethalbig@ocn.me](mailto:harriethalbig@ocn.me).

### High Altitude Nature and Gardening (HANG)

## Garden friends and foes and deleting voles

By Janet Sellers

Last year, I goofed with my garden plot. Thinking dill helps keep a lot of bugs away and moisture in the soil, I let fallen dill seeds grow in raised beds to protect it from bugs, rabbits and deer. But my crops didn't like the dill and didn't thrive, so I'm back to careful planning: rotation to confuse returning pests and companions to improve harvests. Companion plantings can assist soil chemistry, attract good bugs, repel bad

bugs, provide ground cover for moisture, and more.

Lettuce likes everybody, no enemies there. Onions are friends with kale, tomatoes, and peppers (the kale enemies), but hate beans and peas. Surprisingly, nightshade relatives (tomatoes, peppers) dislike potatoes, but beans are friends. A planting chart definitely eases planning.

### Nature's garden helpers

Our bugs aren't out yet, but they're getting ready. We

can stop them in their tracks with trap crops and other clever gardening tricks. Trap crops are plants that attract the bad bugs before they find our good stuff. Beautiful trap crops include nasturtium, alyssum, and mint. Other tricks include moving the crops around so last year's bugs can't find this year's new plantings and companion planting.

### Wasps and garden bad guys

Poisons are the worst bad guys, killing birds, wildlife