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Church Libraries

Summer 2008

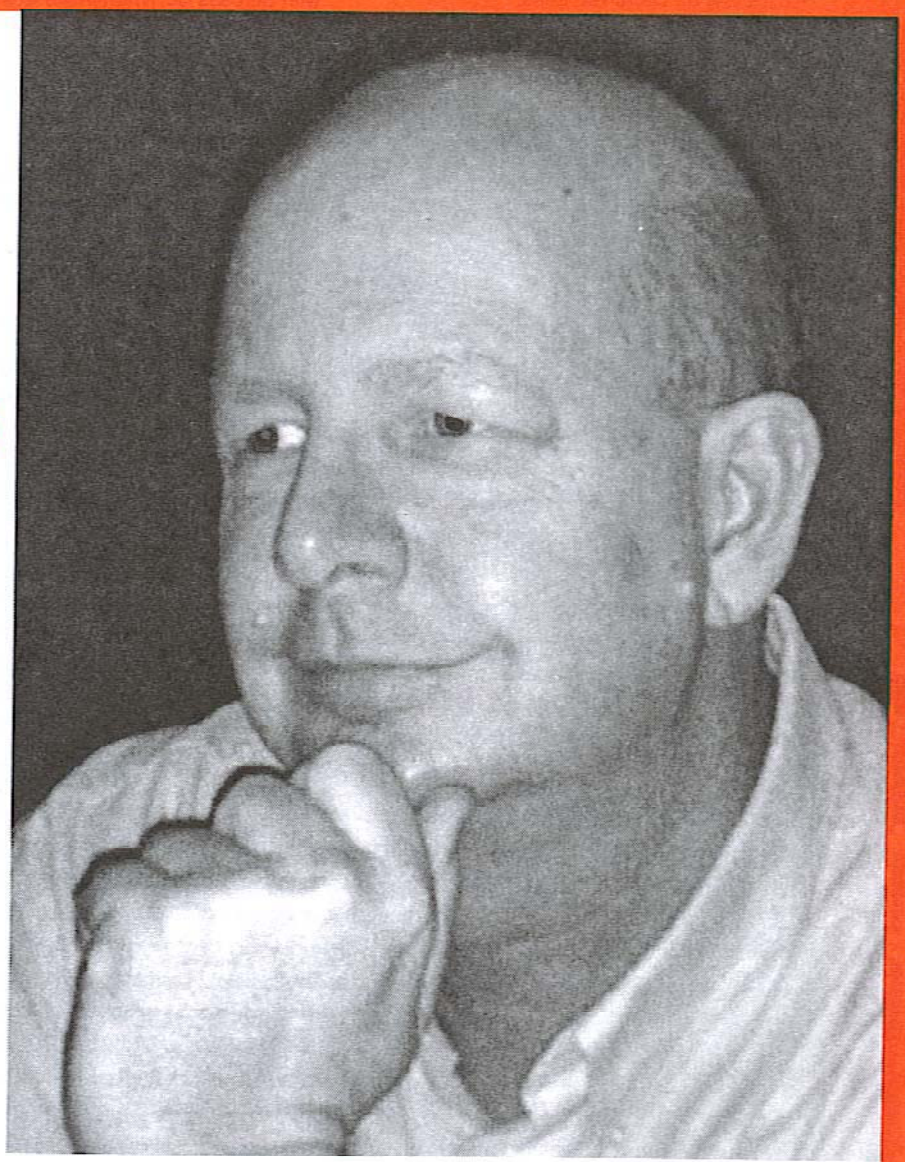
Expanding Your Role

Book Roundup
Caregiving for Caregivers

A Case for Fiction

4 New Bulletin Boards and Posters

Prince Caspian: A Lesson in Trust



Author Jack Cavanaugh
Still Learning After 25 Novels

A Publication of the Evangelical Church Library Association

homework, both in the library and the laboratory of life. From her desire to parent with intentionality and godly values as a foundation, she offers practical suggestions, personal anecdotes, and scriptural wisdom. She supports her thoughts by quoting Scripture and classic writings of Charles Spurgeon and Andrew Murray, as well as contemporary evangelicals.

Reardon draws from and illustrates freely from her own parenting experiences with wit, humility, and insight. At times, however, the book is a bit formulaic and some of the anecdotes didn't always relate to the topic at hand. Also, the use of many acronyms (ADHD) and similes are more welcomed by a generation older than the targeted audience. Despite those few weaknesses, the book is a solid resource for parents. PJH

WHAT YOUR DAUGHTER ISN'T TELLING YOU
by Susie Shellenberger & Kathy Gowler
Bethany, 978-0-7642-0375-6, PB, 190 pages, $13.99

Daughters would like to talk with their moms, but somehow they end up not sharing anything. Using thousands of e-mails and letters from teens, the authors gleaned insights into what is happening in the lives of teenage girls today and the questions they have. Chapters give teens' perspectives on such topics as acceptance, fears, depression, loneliness, sex and dating, pornography, family relationships, self-destructive behaviors, and God. Other chapters deal with fathers, teen stepdaughters and adopted daughters, and rules when turning 18.

Tips on developing and maintaining open communication, how to celebrate a daughter's life, and how to "be there" for your daughter add value to the book.

Shellenberger is the editor of *Brio* and Gowler also works for *Brio* and *Brio and Beyond* and is a teen counselor. This readable and easy-to-understand book is a valuable tool for mothers of teen daughters. LGM

Singles

FIRST COMES LOVE, THEN WHAT?
by Kimberly Beair
Tyndale, 978-1-58997-448-7, PB, 175 pages, $13.99

For many singles, falling in love is not the issue. The problem is that they don't know if it's the "right" someone and, if it is, how to stay in love with that someone. This book helps with those relationship issues that make dating, engagement, and marriage so difficult. Beair, a professional counselor, gives practical advice on how to avoid pitfalls in dating, maintain healthy communication, manage expectations, and deal with relationship conflicts.

With specific examples and personal application and reflection questions, this book gives advice that is relevant to anyone's relationships. Some of the ideas might crush the romantic heart in favor of the rational thought; but in a world focused on feelings, a little logic can be useful. Recommended to both those trying to find love through dating and those trying to maintain it in marriage. SP

Fiction

BEYOND THE NIGHT
by Marlo Schalesky
Multnomah, 978-1-60142-016-9, PB, 304 pages, $12.99

Having feelings for a good friend of the opposite sex is challenging by itself. As Maddie Foster recalls from her hospital bed, it becomes even more complicated when she is diagnosed with Stargardt's disease and begins to go blind. Little does she know, the friend she secretly loves, Paul Tilden, is beginning to feel the same way. Partly out of fear and partly out of her own stubborn pride, she brushes off his attempts at chivalry as pity, something she wants none of. As she attempts to ignore her quickly darkening world, she begins to realize that her fear provides more of a handicap than the blindness she despises.

This love story is tear-jerker as doctors and nurses drift in and out and Paul watches silently over his beloved. With believably flawed characters you can't help but love and a situation you can't help but hate, this book belongs in the hands of anyone in the mood for a good love story with overtones of loyalty, faith, and compassion. SP

BY REASON OF INSANITY
by Randy Singer
Tyndale, 978-1-4143-1633-8, HB, 400 pages, $22.99

Catherine O'Rourke has been arrested and accused of five cases of murder, and even her attorneys are trying to convince her she's insane. Quinn Newberg, a lawyer defending his own sister on a murder charge, takes Catherine's case but is convinced the insanity plea is the only way she can avoid the death penalty. But not everyone in the courtroom is whom they seem to be.

Singer's legal thriller brings what readers have come to love: likable characters; unexpected twists; and blunt, gritty description of the seedier side of life. His secondary characters are somewhat clichéd; and the ending, although intriguing, contains too many twists and surprises to be believable. However, overall it is a well-written book and will appeal to teens and adults who enjoy the genre. NB

CENTURION
by L. D. Alford
Capstone, 978-1-60290-012-7, PB, 382 pages, $17.95

Abendar and his mother endured

disapproving stares in the village of Natzeret; but so did Yesuha, son of Yosef and Miryam. The two outcasts became fast friends. Abendar then left his village to join the Roman legion and eventually rose to the rank of centurion. Abendar subsequently rescued Ruth, a woman from the streets, and fell in love with her. As the story unfolds after years have passed, we see that Ruth believes that Jesus is the Messiah; but Abendar is doubtful, although curious. However, his duty to the legion and Pontius Pilate may cause him to lose everything: Ruth's love, his friendship with Jesus, and his soul's redemption.

Centurion is a heartwarming tale about an unlikely friendship, love, and a painful betrayal. A passage from Psalms begins each chapter and gives a clue as to what will happen. Alford does a beautiful job of creating realistic characters and believable dialogue. This is a book for teens and adults. The reader gets a picture of daily life in Jesus' time. Highly recommended. EDW

EVERY GOOD & PERFECT GIFT
by Sharon K. Souza
NavPress, 978-1-60006-175-2, PB, 367 pages, $12.99

Gabby is a calm pushover in her relationship with vibrant, strong-willed, and flighty DeeDee. Unfortunately, their roles are about to shift with the presence of a life-altering diagnosis. Before the diagnosis, though, DeeDee decides late in life that she wants to have a baby. Her decision is met with instant resistance. However, her husband and her friends soon relent, and the only problem lies within her. After two years of trying, DeeDee finally conceives. The baby arrives in time to be a beacon in the dark pain that is quickly enshrouding DeeDee and her loved ones.

Souza mixes mild humor into her novel, lightening the sullen mood. The characters are realistic and mostly likable, making it easy to feel compassion for their plights. However, readers might not appreciate the lack of discretion and moral judgment in the first half. The medical aspect of Souza's novel seems well researched. Mature women will most enjoy this novel. CM

FOSSIL HUNTER
by John B. Olson
Tyndale, 978-1-4143-2195-0, PB, 368 pages, $13.99

This novel has a purpose: to convince thinking believers the debate between creationists and evolutionists isn't cut and dried. It's a story about paleontologist Katie James, hunting for a whale fossil in the Iraqi desert. There is romance when archrival Nick Murad joins the hunt, but the theme is Katie's struggle to reconcile faith in God (her father is a preacher with a simplistic creation view) with what she sees in the scientific evidence she uncovers. In it all, she sees intelligent design—and doesn't care whether God created the world in six 24-hour days or six "periods of time" of unknown length.

At times the writing is tedious, especially early when the author, a computational biochemist, does a multipage file dump of fossil history. But once the action swings into gear, the characters come alive and the heart-pounding events engage the imagination. Recommended for a thoughtful, entertaining read. J-AI

THE MOON IN THE MANGO TREE
by Pamela Binnings Ewen
B&H, 0-8054-4733-4, PB, 480 pages, $15.99

Time is running out for Barbara to achieve her dream of singing opera professionally. She gives up everything to become a proper missionary's wife. In the jungles of Siam in the 1920s, she struggles with her faith and desire to make a difference. She must choose between her love of singing and love for her husband before her dreams outrun her and disappear into the horizon.

Ewen developed realistic characters who deal with timeless, universal questions: What is God's will? Does God exist? What matters most in life? She wrote in first person and filled her novel with vivid details, but the book takes patience to read. Although the plot and characters capture the reader's attention, the novel is long and details sometimes become tedious. Recommended for church libraries and readers trying to find meaning in their lives. HW

MY HEART REMEMBERS
by Kim Vogel Sawyer
Bethany, 978-0-7642-0262-9, PB, 220 pages, $13.99

Two sisters and a brother are sent West on an orphan train after the deaths of their immigrant parents. Maelle, Mattie, and Molly are separated at a young age and spend the majority of their adolescence living completely different lives. When they all are miraculously brought to the same town, it is only a matter of time before they find God's purpose for their lives and one another.

Sawyer uses each of the three main characters' perspectives to tell the story, allowing readers to see how the characters are individually being transformed and their lives intertwined. Foreshadowing makes the conclusion too predictable, and Christian elements are obvious. However, it is a romantic and interesting choice for female historical fiction fans. LC

ONE MORE SUNRISE
by Michael Landon, Jr. & Tracie Peterson
Bethany, 978-0-7642-0362-6, PB, 368 pages, $13.9

Joe Daley is the pilot of a crop duster in rural America. He has a wonderful family but remains detached from almost every aspect of their lives. Joe is so disappointed about dreams that failed to materialize and depressed about the mistakes of his past that he