Mystery Edition

Summer: A Season to Die For
A Delicate Truth, John Le Carré

John Le Carré is the best example I know of how wrongheaded it is to sub-classify authors by genre, since he writes blazingly good thrillers that are simultaneously world-class literary fiction. Case in point: A Delicate Truth. In the opening pages a joint operation between Brits and Americans is occurring; the Brits are military, the Americans mercenary. It is this ill-conceived operation, the lies that provide cover, the truth that might or might not emerge, that are the fulcrum for all that happens in the novel. The main players, at least those interested in truth, are the diplomat who provides eyes and ears for the minister in charge, the soldier who leads the British side of the operation, and the minister's private secretary, Toby Bell. Each is a fully drawn character, each comes slowly to a version of truth, and then, almost unwillingly, to the necessity for making that truth public. But the most fully drawn character of all is the government that hides the truth. And it's a frightening character indeed—all-seeing, all-powerful, and interested in nothing besides its own image and the bottom-line financials of those at its helm. Le Carré provides an all-too-accurate picture of the post 9/11 world as it exists in Great Britain today—and in the U.S. as well. That's a truth that should concern us all. – Betsy Burton, Viking, 28.95 Editor’s note: Or have John Le Carré, whose voice is as brilliant as his pen, read A Delicate Truth to you. Unforgettable! (Penguin Audio,$39.95)

Norwegian by Night, Derek B. Miller

What happens when you take a displaced Jewish senior citizen living in Norway with his granddaughter and her new husband, a terrible murder in the apartment upstairs, and a young boy thrust into the arms of a stranger in the hope that he will be saved? Fortunately, elderly Sheldon Horowitz is a former Marine sniper who has the skills to save the boy and himself from certain death. Or does he? His granddaughter knows him only as a retired watchmaker whose only son, her father, died in the Vietnam War. While this is a serious mystery at heart, it is also filled with humor and compassion and the beauty of discovering who you are and who you can become, no matter your age. Brilliant! – Anne Holman, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, $26

Bad Monkey, Carl Haasen

Yancy’s been booted off the Miami police force and now he’s on permanent suspension from the County Sheriff’s office, reduced to inspecting for roaches in restaurant kitchens. As much as he wants his old job back, when he’s ordered to ignore a human arm caught on a fishing hook, he just can’t comply. He gets the arm autopsied in Miami where he learns two things: one, said arm probably wasn't chewed off the missing corpse by sharks as previously posited; and two, the coroner has—at least to Yancy—an appealingly kinky nature. Meanwhile, in the Bahamas, a man and his monkey have been displaced from a stretch of coastline they love by some rich developers. To make matters worse, said monkey has gone over to the dark side as companion to the Voodoo Queen who has taken the developer’s bald bodyguard as a lover. Bad monkey, bald psycho, avaricious developers, sex-mad voodoo queen? Add to that rich stew Yancy’s former girlfriend on the lam from the law and back in town, throw in the wife who belongs to the missing corpse that belongs to the arm that now resides in Yancy’s freezer—and you have Haasen at the top of his form: at once howlingly funny and deadly serious, at least when it comes to the environment. – Betsy Burton, Knopf, $26.95

Conspiracy of Faith, Jussi Adler-Olsen

Number 3 in the annals of Department Q gives Rose her first case, a message in a bottle. Written in blood, it’s a desperate cry for help. Meanwhile, Assad is stringing together cold arson cases, and Carl Morck, the brilliant but lazy head of Q, feels like he’s herding cats. Together the dysfunctional team (with assistance from Yrsa), uncovers multiple kidnap-for-ransom schemes, where each time the money is paid, the kidnapper is protected by a conspiracy of faith—a conspiracy Department Q will have to shatter. – Paula Longhurst, Dutton, $26.95

Slingshot, Matthew Dunn

1995: A top-secret meeting among top U.S. and Russian commanders, the subject, Project Slingshot, an accord so unthinkably that a deadly assassin is tasked with silencing anyone who threatens to expose its secret. Present Day: Will Cochrane’s Mi6 operation to aid a defector has just gone sideways in Poland, and Cochrane, codename Spartan, thinks the document the Russian stole just before his defection is the reason he was kidnapped. As Will pulls at the threads leading to Slingshot, via Tel Aviv, the Scottish Highlands and the European court of Human Rights in the Hague, he becomes a threat to a shadowy East German powerbroker who deals ruthlessly with his enemies and their loved ones. Russia has tasked its own spycatcher to retrieve the document by any means necessary, and elements in the CIA would rather betray Cochrane than help him. In order to prevent a high-level political assassination, Will’s going to have to risk everything, his job, his loved ones and his life. – Paula Longhurst, William Morrow, $25.99 Editor’s note: This third volume in the Spycatcher series will be available June 25.

The Golden Egg, Donna Leon

Despite the beauties offered up by autumnal Venice and the wonderful aromas emanating from the trattorias and from his own kitchen, all is not well in Commissario Guido Brunetti’s world. A young man
who works for the dry cleaners, someone who was said to be a deaf-mute, and perhaps mentally disabled as well, has died from an apparent overdose. Although the death doesn’t appear to be suspicious, Brunetti promises his wife Paola that he will find out more; what he discovers is a life virtually unrecorded—no documents recording birth or education or work of any kind, no credit history…. But how can this be in an age of such implacable and stifling bureaucracy? And why won’t the mother of the deceased talk to Brunetti? In one of the more thoughtful and moving tales in this wonderful series, Leon throws light on the hidden past of a prominent family, revealing the magnitude of one person’s greed, malice, and stupidity in the process. Leon’s melancholy atmosphere fits the season and the mood of the aging inspector—a man whose gravitas and subtlety grow from book to book. – Betsy Burton, Atlantic Monthly Press, $26

The Last Girl, Jane Casey
DC Maeve Kerrigan is part of the team investigating a double murder in one of London’s most luxurious neighborhoods during a vicious heat wave. The two survivors, a successful barrister and his least-favorite daughter, don’t seem to want the case solved. Who was the real target? On the personal front, Kerrigan’s fledging relationship with colleague Rob is taking a pounding, and her chief, the man she has always trusted, is keeping secrets of his own. – Paula Longhurst, Minotaur, $24.99

The Stranger, Camilla Läckberg
Patrik Hedström is getting married but he won’t have time to be nervous. There’s a reality show filming in town and someone just murdered one of the contestants. Conducting a murder investigation in the glare of national publicity is wreaking havoc with their other cases, and Patrik has a hunch that the answers to solving the case may have been staring them in the face, all along. – Paula Longhurst, Norton, $25.95

Anonymous Sources, Mary Louise Kelly
When Thom Carlyle is found dead at the foot of a Harvard Yard tower, the police are nonplussed, as is Alex James, a very sharp young reporter assigned to write an in-depth piece about it for the Chronicle. Alex’s probing tells her that the case is more complicated than campus and Boston Police would have the public think. She has a nose for news,
a real talent for investigative reporting, and her mostly misogynist boss twisted around her little finger. Kelly, a former NPR correspondent, possesses the same kind of talent—for the writing, not the twisting. This thriller will keep you glued to the story until the very last page – Kathy Ashton, Gallery Books (S&S), $26

The Perfume Collector, Kathleen Tessaro

I loved this tale of the great parfumeur of the 1920s, Eva d’Orsey, whose most famous scent was marketed as My Sin, once the most popular scent in Paris and New York—for those wealthy enough to afford it. Three decades later, Grace Munroe, a beautiful young Londoner, receives a letter from Paris. Oddly, she knows no one there, and the letterhead on the envelope is a Paris law firm. Stranger and stranger. When, after much dithering, she finally opens the letter, it announces that she has received a bequest and includes a plane ticket to Paris to discuss her inheritance. In Paris she learns about Eva, but not why she is her heir. The book flips back and forth from Eva’s life to Grace’s, from Paris in the daring 1920s, to conservative mid-fifties London. This is a novel of love, of life, of learning, of perfume and its manufacture, of friends. A fascinating read. – Kathy Ashton, Harper, $24.99

The Black Country, Alex Grecian

Three missing, two days, one eyeball. In the follow-up to The Yard, Day, Hammersmith, and Kingsley are sent to Blackhampton, a coal-mining town being slowly subsumed by the tunnels that produce its lifeblood. The area is rife with local superstition, locals who won’t talk, or talk too much—and where are the rest of the villagers? Worse, someone has followed the men from Scotland Yard, someone hell-bent on settling an old score. – Paula Longhurst, Putnam, $26.95

The Tower, Simon Toyne

The two biggest telescopes on earth have been sabotaged, seemingly by the program heads. Their message? ‘Mankind must look no further.’ Rookie Joe Shepherd is pulled off training and paired with a veteran FBI man to investigate, but Joe is hiding things from his partner. Meanwhile Liv and her companions are getting used to their new Eden and a dying Gabriel is riding back to the ancient city of Ruin, hoping to contain the disease that threatens his very sanity. The prophecy activated by the death of Liv’s brother is coming to pass, the Mala and the Sancti are on a collision course. Could this be a new beginning, or the end of days? This is the last thrilling chapter in the Sanctus trilogy following Sanctus and The Key. – Paula Longhurst, William Morrow, $25.99

A Man Without Breath, Philip Kerr

It’s 1943, and Bernie Gunther is a Berlin cop assigned to the German War Crimes Bureau which investigates human rights violations. He is not a Nazi but a loyal German and a seeker after justice. At the core of the novel is the Katyn Forrest massacre in which perhaps 4000 Polish officers were executed in a village close to Smolensk. Bernie’s job is to investigate who committed the massacre, then, if it is the Reds, to publicize it, and, if not—just keep quiet. The massacre is not the only murder in Smolensk that season; Bernie uses his professional police instincts to find the murderer of two German soldiers as well. The community Kerr depicts includes a group of Prussian aristocrats who comprised an important sub-group in the German military, ordinary German soldiers, and Russian prisoners of war. Gunther’s “war zone” is not only the Russian front but his fellow Germans. For readers who have not read any of the Philip Kerr novels: begin with Berlin Noir (trilogy) and follow Bernie’s history within the confines of a Berlin and Germany dominated by Hitler but not inhabited by Nazis alone in tales not told in ordinary history books. – Wendy Foster Leigh, G.P. Putnam’s Sons, $26.95

Loyalty, Ingrid Thoft

The female PI is back! Meet Fina Ludlow, law school dropout but retained in her Boston lawyer father’s firm as their in-house private eye. Fina’s family are Boston royalty, so when Fina’s sister-in-law, Melanie, goes AWOL, the Ludlows want her found, pronto. Melanie has gone missing before but this is different, and the deeper Fina digs the more doubts she has about her brother’s innocence. To make matters worse, someone is out to run her right off the investigation, and Boston PD would just love to nail a Ludlow on a murder charge. How far will Fina’s loyalty stretch? – Paula Longhurst, Putnam, $25.95

Seduction, M.J. Rose

The island of Jersey 1853: Victor Hugo, in self-imposed exile, becomes obsessed by the idea of contacting his dead daughter. But his séances bring something ancient and evil into his home, something that dangles a terrible bargain before him. Jersey, present day: Jac L’Etoile is visiting Theo, an old friend who she lost touch with after an incident at the Blixer Rath Institute where both were being treated. Theo’s offer to show Jac the ancient Celtic sites on the island also hides another obsession, finding Victor Hugo’s missing journals—a process that will also uncover secrets, some of them deadly, held by Theo’s family and Jac’s ancestors. – Paula Longhurst, Atria, $24
**Dead Lions**, Mick Herron

We’re once again in the Slough House of the funny, fetching spy novel *Slow Horses*, the place where failed spies were sent out to pasture. Fat, flatulent Jackson Lamb is still at the helm and River Cartwright is still his unhappy minion, continuing to slog away at meaningless trivia while across the way MI5 garners all the glory. Then two things happen to relieve the torpor of the unhappy agents: an old spy is murdered and two of the occupants of Slough House are called into action by MI5, an unheard of event. Their job is to provide security for a meeting involving a Russian financial superstar while Jackson Lamb, in the process of investigating the murder, is on the trail of another Russian superstar. In keeping with a plot involving Russian spies, there are wheels within wheels, plots nesting inside other plots and the complexity grows from page to page. So does the humor in a thriller that has you laughing out loud even as you gasp in surprise, following false trails to blind alleys, even as you’re blindsided by truth.

– Betsy Burton, SOHO, $25.95

**The Fame Thief**, Timothy Hallinan

Raymond Chandler meets Carl Hiaasen in blissful union in a schizophrenic mystery that’s at once hysterically funny and authentically noir, wildly imaginative and historically accurate, insistently cynical and surprisingly touching. At its heart is Junior Bender—professional burglar/turned criminal detective—as in detective hired by criminals. He’s been engaged by one-time big-time Hollywood mob boss Irwin Dressler, who has been brooding for years about who ruined the life and career of the moll of his dreams, 1940s starlet Dolores La Marr. Now it’s time to find out who set her up all those years ago, and Bender’s the man for the job. In a twisted plot that leads decades back in time and geographically from Hollywood to DC, Vegas to Palm Springs, Junior investigates and mayhem follows as, in short order, everyone not already dead of old age is murdered. Hallinan is a whiz-bang plotter, a genius at characterization, and a maestro with dialogue—especially the witty kind. All perfect ingredients for the perfect summer read.

– Betsy Burton, SOHO, $25

**Live by Night**, Dennis Lehane

Prohibition, racketeering, murder, and Joe Coughlin, son of a prominent Boston police commissioner, is right in the middle. Joe is out to take down Albert White and his bootlegging operation after both men fall for the same girl. Run out of Boston and into prison, Joe takes his revenge in Tampa by day, lives and loves in the vibrant backstreets and sultry jazz clubs of the city’s Latin Quarter by night.

– Paula Longhurst, William Morrow Paperbacks, $16.99

**Phantom**, Jo Nesbø

Harry Hole never intended to return from Hong Kong; he certainly didn’t want to go back into police work, but family makes you funny that way. Oslo hasn’t changed for the better; there’s a new drug on the streets known as ‘Violin.’ Oleg, the closest thing Harry has to a son, has admitted to shooting a dealer, and Harry wants to know the truth. His investigation into burners, Ukrainians, mules, and killers with long sharp knives leads him to a showdown, maybe his last.

– Paula Longhurst, Vintage, $14.95

**The Paris Directive**, Gerald Jay

Set in Taziac, a fictional French village close to the Dordogne River in southwest France, this mystery is atmospheric in the best way, capturing the mores of the rural French, the immigrants who work among them, the American tourists who plague them, the scions of international corporations who play shadowy roles in the background, and the wonderfully characterized Mazarelle, the Parisian cop at the center of the tale. Said tale begins with an assassin who has been hired to kill someone vacationing in Taziac. Used to such work, our killer has a simple plan, but when people stumble onto the murder scene, instead of one corpse, suddenly there are four. Mazarelle becomes involved in the investigation (as does the daughter of one of the victims) after the locals have bungled it. Although the consequences of the crime begin to take on global proportions, the fulcrum of the tale remains grounded in the French rural countryside and its denizens. *The Paris Directive* is the first in what one can hope is a continuing colorful and thoroughly entertaining series.

– Betsy Burton, Anchor, $15

**Silent Wife**, A.S.A. Harrison

Jodi and Todd live in a swanky Chicago high rise. She’s a therapist while he’s in construction. Their relationship is a carefully constructed façade. He cheats, she knows and does nothing.
Then along comes Natasha Kovacs. Jodi’s perfect life is about to be wrenched from her grip by a knocked-up bimbo, and she'll do anything to keep it, anything. – Paula Longhurst, Penguin, $16

**The Art Forger**, B. A. Shapiro

If you have ever wanted to forge a famous painting, this charming mystery offers all the answers. In addition to the techniques it provides, however, you will need a great deal of talent, a very good eye for infinite detail, and an MFA. When Claire Roth is offered a year’s salary to reproduce a Degas, one of the famous paintings stolen from Boston’s Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in 1990 (the biggest art heist ever), she feels she is safe because she is told it will be represented as a copy by one of the city’s most reputable dealers, Aidan Markel. He also offers her a one-woman show in his gallery. A professional copyist, Claire supports herself making almost identical copies which even expert appraisers cannot identify. The paintings are then sold by an Internet firm as copies worth many thousands of dollars. Red herrings abound as Claire defends herself against charges of forgery brought by the FBI and the Boston police when her copy is hung as an original Degas. I loved it. – Kathy Ashton, Algonquin, $14.95

**Grandad, There’s a Head on the Beach**, Colin Cotterill

Jimm Juree dreams of being a front-page crime reporter on a major daily newspaper in Chiang Mai or writing a screenplay for Clint Eastwood, but she is currently the chief cook and bottle washer for her family’s run-down holiday camp on the Gulf of Siam in rural Thailand. When the head of an unknown Burmese man washes up on the beach, she anticipates a story for the local paper, but she runs into troubles with the police and her own family because no one really cares about the Burmese, who are underpaid, migrant laborers. Cotterill loves putting his characters into bizarre situations; his writing is witty, but underneath the humor is a cynical look at political and social problems in Thailand and the hint that they aren’t confined to that country alone. – Wendy Foster Leigh, Minotaur Books, $15.99

**The Yard**, Alex Grecian

Scotland Yard established its murder squad in the late 19th century with only 12 detectives. The best and the brightest of them is Walter Day, imported from a rural constabulary where he solved many a crime. London is emerging from a period of real terror as Jack the Ripper’s reign reigned supreme. Now that Jack has met his maker, another very clever soul seems bent on killing bobbies (bluebottles, in local slang), very small boys, and the occasional victim who doesn’t seem to fit the pattern at all. Grecian has a real flair for developing nuanced characters and bringing late Victorian London to bright and noisy life: Dr. Kingsley, the coroner, who is bent on modernizing London’s morgue; Kingsley’s lovely daughter, who sketches his corpses; Day’s wife, who dotes on him; and the murderer himself. – Kathy Ashton, Berkley, $16

**Prague Fatale**, Philip Kerr

In 1942, Private Detective Bernie Gunther, who himself deplores the Nazi regime, attracts the attention of Reinhard Heydrich, who orders him to act as his bodyguard. His new job takes him to Prague and into the midst of the worst of the Nazi hierarchy. When one of Heydrich’s adjutants is found murdered in what appears to be a locked room, Gunther sets to work to uncover the perpetrator. Political intrigue, conspiracy and consummate evil face Gunther in this latest of the wonderful series created by Kerr. – Barbara Hoagland, Penguin, $16.95

**Mission to Paris**, Alan Furst

Stahl is not strong on world politics by nature; he’s just an actor doing his job—in 1938 Berlin as it happens. However much he’d like to remain uninvolved in world events and concentrate on his play, there are those who want to use him, whether as a symbol or a clandestine agent. He has obvious value to both sides, a fact which puts him in strange situations in which he must parse out truth quickly. It begins to seem inevitable that he become a player on the board of war. As usual, Furst mixes history, war, romance (sex included) into a heady brew in an espionage tale that will keep you happily awake into the night. – Betsy Burton, Random Trade, $16

**Niceville**, Carsten Stroud

Niceville is a quiet Southern town—if you’re just passing through. Even then you might feel that something is just plain wrong with the place, an undercurrent of weird running through the middle of all those normal-looking folks. People just vanish in Niceville—there one minute, gone the next. The town has other troubles too: the residents are still in shock from a deadly bank robbery; someone is e-mailing lies and porn to local residents; in hi-tech Quantum Park a nerd has blackmail on his mind; and lapping at the sanity of the inhabitants are the bottomless waters of Crater Sink, full of an ancient malice that was there long before the plantation town was founded. – Paula Longhurst, Anchor, $15
**Night Film**, Marisha Pessl (August)

Investigative journalist Scott McGrath’s fame came crashing down around him when he took on reclusive filmmaker Cordova, a man whose movies are so visceral and disturbing that they are screened only in secret late at night. A false source made McGrath pay dearly. Years later Cordova’s daughter Ashley throws herself from the top of a deserted warehouse and McGrath, haunted by a vision in red that might have been her, starts to investigate her death. Along with wannabe actress Nora and the enigmatic Hopper, he plumbs the depths of the Cordovites, the secret websites and obsessed fans. But who is investigating whom? And why was Ashley so keen to protect young children? What is ‘the devil’s mark?’ Did Mathilde kill Ashley and how come all the actors in Cordova’s films fled from his compound and studio, The Peak? Forever changed, McGrath is beginning to think he’s in a night film of his own and, for the character he is playing, this doesn’t always end well. – Paula Longhurst, Random House, $28

**Light of the World**, James Lee Burke (July)

This is the twentieth Dave Robichaux mystery and it’s another winner. Alafair is in trouble—and she’s scared. Bad guys are showing up everywhere, following her, threatening her. Dave calls in the local sheriff and summons Clete, who arrives with his psychotic daughter Gretchen. As is usual when either Clete or Gretchen is around, murder and mayhem ensue. Burke has won nearly every award for mystery writers and rightfully so; he has also been named a master of the genre by the Mystery Writers of America. And in this new novel, he is at the top of his game: gorgeous language, compelling plot, wonderful, if occasionally terrifying characters. Read it and enjoy. – Kathy Ashton, Simon & Schuster, $27.99

**Last Word**, Lisa Lutz (July)

Staging a hostile takeover of the family firm of Spellman Investigations is one thing, managing a sartorial revolt by the employees is quite another for Izzy. Her parents turn up for work in their pajamas, her mother says she’ll teach Izzy the accounting system when hell freezes over. Things are so bad that Grammy Spellman is answering the phones! In the meantime there’s an investigation into Divine Strategies, an accounting firm that Izzy’s billionaire friend Edward Slayter is looking to acquire. Slayter’s illness is getting worse, and the FBI thinks Izzy’s embezzling money from his company. Can Izzy stay out of jail and prevent a couple more life-changing hostile takeovers? – Paula Longhurst, Simon & Schuster, $25
**Homecoming**, Carsten Stroud (July)

Six months have passed in the town of Niceville, and the town is as weird as ever. The bank robbers still haven’t been caught, people are still going missing. Kate and Nick have become legal guardians of young Rainey Teague. Kate has been having weird dreams about the plantation that used to stand in Niceville and about Abel Teague, a very bad man indeed...Stroud’s mash-up of small town life, feuding families, wry narration and horror gives you a follow-up to Niceville that you might not want to read after dark. There had better be a sequel. – Paula Longhurst, Knopf, $25

**Crime of Privilege**, Walter Walker (July)

When a young woman is found dead on the golf course at an exclusive Cape Cod country club, her death is not investigated carefully. It’s almost as though she is a nobody because she’s local. Her father haunts the DA’s office weekly, asking if anything new has been discovered. George Becket is the lowest-level attorney at the Cape and Islands District Attorney’s Office, his office in the basement—out of sight, out of mind. When he is approached by the girl’s father, who is trying yet again to find out if the office has any new information on the still-open case, George pulls out the dusty case file. He soon notices that there was a party the evening of the death at the home of a politically prominent and extremely wealthy family. The tension builds by the page as he digs out more information and the answers to his questions become clearer—answers that tie to his own past. A terrific read. – Kathy Ashton, Ballantine, $26

**A Dangerous Fiction**, Barbara Rogan (July)

Jo Donovan has an impeccable pedigree in the publishing world as widow of the famed writer Hugo Donovan, to whom she was everything—first reader, exacting editor, passionate lover, perfect companion, chef extraordinaire for nearly 15 years. When Hugo died she was bereft, at sea, until his partner Molly, the other half of the Hamish Donovan Literary Agency, asked Jo to assume her husband’s role as senior partner in one of the best agencies in Manhattan. Molly, her dear friend and surrogate mother, suffering from terminal cancer, has given all her responsibilities to Jo, whose life is one of well-worn routine, until her English parents still serving in Northern India and back to the English countryside. Bess, on leave from her job as a front-line nurse, her mother, the Colonel Sahib and his Sergeant Major, Simon, are all trying to solve a series of decades-old murders dating back to an English family’s terrible abuse of children left in their care by their English parents still serving in India. – Kathy Ashton, Morrow, $26.99

**Tamarack County**, William Kent Krueger (August)

Set in the vicious winter cold of north country Minnesota, Krueger’s newest thriller featuring ex-Sheriff Cork O’Connor will make you shiver in sympathy, so turn up the heat and all the lights and get ready to light the fire (yes, of course, we know it’s summer, but it’s not going to feel like it) before you head for your most comfortable chair, because you’ll probably be there til morning. The bad guy has targeted Cork’s family, always a bad idea when you’re dealing with this widower, not to say that the man doesn’t currently have an eye for the ladies. He isn’t officially a member of the department any more, but he was the well-respected sheriff for many years and is often called in on the tough cases by Sheriff Dross—and this is one tough case that will put Tamarack County’s finest through their paces. – Kathy Ashton, Atria, $24.99

**A Question of Honor**, Charles Todd (August)

This mystery will keep you on the edge of your seat as the action segues halfway across the world from the killing fields of WWI France to the high country of Northern India and back to the English countryside. Bess, on leave from her job as a front-line nurse, her mother, the Colonel Sahib and his Sergeant Major, Simon, are all trying to solve a series of decades-old murders dating back to an English family’s terrible abuse of children left in their care by their English parents still serving in India. – Kathy Ashton, Morrow, $26.99

**Blood Game: A Jock Boucher Thriller**, David Lyons (August)

The judge has a penchant for getting himself into the nastiest, most dangerous scrapes and is contemplating leaving the Federal Bench after his latest contretemps when he receives a dressing-down by the president himself, who disabuses him of the notion. Lyons has created a plot line as convoluted as the mangrove roots that grow along the Louisiana bayous; it involves the richest man in the state, another who runs a consortium of all the investigative branches involved in the war on drugs, a general who commands all the armed forces stationed along the U.S. border, as well as Boucher’s best friend Detective Fitch of the NOPD. They are all (except Fitch and the judge) in on a plan to help avenge the death of Mr. Dumont’s son, who was murdered in a grisly fashion by a Mexican drug lord. Prepare to be on the on the edge of your seat from start to finish. – Kathy Ashton, Atria ($S&S), $15
Commissaire Adamsberg marches to his own drum and follows instinct more than logic. His Parisian team includes an Amazon, two rival inspectors, and now his son, Zerk, who is nursing a pigeon back to health. Vargas has added the bizarre residents of Ordebec to her cast of characters, including a wonderful group of French aristocrats, an elderly countess, and a beautiful prophet who has caused this uproar. Vargas creates her characters with a fine brush. They are real and funny and sad and they are undeniably French. Her descriptions have a touch of Maigret to them. Commissaire Adamsberg is a mysterious police detective who is willing to sit on a rock and think rather than hurry to solve the case. His detectives are as much a family to him as his own son and the ancient feuds of the village become part of his life. – Wendy Foster Leigh, (Penguin Mystery Original) $15

The Man from Berlin, Luke McCallin (July)
Yugoslavia in 1943 is a confusing combination of Germans, Croatians, Serbians, Muslims, and partisans. In the midst of the military/political confusion a beautiful filmmaker and a German officer are murdered. Captain Gregor Reinhardt, military intelligence officer may be assigned to the case but his power is limited by the interference of both local police and competing German departments. Many books have been written about the role of the police in Nazi Germany but this one looks at the factions within a particularly divided world, unified through the personality and problems of Captain Reinhardt. McCallin’s portrayal of the landscape of the time is compelling. Reinhardt’s confusion reflects the divisions among the military and the moral ambiguities of war; his decisions are not simple “cops” choices but choices that will affect the future of the war. – Wendy Foster Leigh, Penguin, $15

The Beautiful Mystery, Louise Penny (July)
The first abbot of Saint-Gilbert-Entre-les-Loupes Monastery hid his brethren in the wilds of Québec Province in the 17th century. The monks remained there, no one aware of their existence, until now, when the current abbot calls Sûreté du Québec to report a murder. Chief Inspector Gamache decides to take his young assistant, Beauvoir, along on a potentially sensitive case located in the back of beyond, reachable only by float plane. The two policemen would be the first outsiders ever to visit the abbey—some record, considering how long the abbey has been there. What they find is a very dead choirmaster with his head bashed in, in the abbot’s private garden. How he got there, and why, in a religious community dedicated solely to preserving the purest versions of Plainsong (glorious songs created to mark the day’s offices), is the stuff of this terrific mystery. Gamache and Beauvoir’s discretion, their sensitivity to the situation, and how they discover the culprit’s identity makes for a fascinating read. – Kathy Ashton, Minotaur, $15.99

The Ghost Riders of Ordebec, Fred Vargas (July)
Commissaire Adamsberg and his team are in the midst of an ongoing case—the fiery death of a prominent Parisian; however, when a peculiar woman arrives in his office telling of the legend of the Ghost Riders in the village of Ordebec and prophesying violent deaths, his curiosity gets the better of him. He travels to Normandy to solve the first murder and anticipating more destruction from the “furious army.”

june is international crime month, dedicated to crime fiction, not the actual commission of crimes.

International Crime Month is a month-long initiative featuring internationally acclaimed crime fiction authors, editors, critics, and publishers who will appear together in a series of readings, panels, and discussions from four of America’s most influential independent publishers—Grove Atlantic, Akashic Books, Melville House, and Europa Editions.

http://internationalcrimemonth.tumblr.com/
Middle Reader MYSTERIES by Margaret Brennan Neville

**A Serpent’s Tooth**, Craig Johnson

Trouble seems to find Sheriff Walt Longmire and Henry Standing Bear no matter where they go. When it’s disguised as religion, someone’s going to get hurt. Cord Lynear is a “lost boy”; that is, a teenager whose male elders have kicked him out of a polygamous compound. Why are there polygamists in Absaroka County anyway? In the course of trying to reunite Cord with someone, anyone, who can help him, Walt, Henry, and, of course, Vic discover that this “peaceful” group has very expensive weapons and a whole lot to hide. Craig Johnson has done it again; taken us on a thrill ride we won’t soon forget. They just get better and better!

– Anne Holman, Viking, $26.95

**Hold Fast**, Blue Balliett

Early and her family are dreaming of being in their own home, when her dad goes missing. Becoming homeless is bad, but it’s just part of the problem, and only Early recognizes the clues all around her. Balliett took this title from a Langston Hughes poem; his style echoes through the book (check out the chapter names). Like her previous mysteries, this is so much more than a who-dunit. Readers will love the mystery within the mystery; they will love how Balliett incorporates the library into the story. Clever, creative and compelling, this is Balliett at her best. – $17.99 (10 and up)

**Fish Finelli: Seagulls Don’t Eat Pickles**, E. S. Farber

Fish and his best friends, Roger and T.J., have to prove the town bully wrong by finding the pirates treasure. The boys will put themselves through all sorts of trials and tribulations to find the booty, including being buried in "goose poop." Illustrations and fun facts in sidebars make this a complete package for an emerging reader. Engaging and funny, this will also make a great family read-aloud.

– Chronicle, $15.99 (7 and up)

**Escape from Mr. Lemoncello’s Library**, Chris Grabenstein

Kyle wins a contest for one of 12 coveted spots; the prize is a sleepover in the library. When the kids get up the next morning and find that they can’t leave, they have to use all of their talents, skills and smarts to figure out why! This is a mystery, an adventure and a puzzle; it features quirky characters, surprising plot twists and a great sense of humor. All the readers at your house will love it! – Random House, $16.99 (8 and up)

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Craig Johnson Gallops into Town!

We’re moving over to the Viridian Event Center for a blow-out event for A Serpent’s Tooth, the ninth in the beloved Walt Longmire series.

Here’s a secret…there’s a SLC local in this book; see if you can figure out who it is!

To ensure a signed copy, pre-order online or by calling the store at 801-484-9100.

Thursday, July 25, 7 p.m.

Presented with The Salt Lake County Library Services at The Viridian Event Center, 8030 South 1825 West.

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A Serpent’s Tooth, Craig Johnson
BEST MYSTERIES FOR YOUNG READERS

Hoot, Flush, Scat & Chomp
by Carl Hiassen

From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler
by E.L. Konigsburg

P.K. Pinkerton and the Deadly Desperados
by Caroline Lawrence

The Westing Game
by Ellen Raskin

Chasing Vermeer
by Blue Balliett

Sammy Keyes and the Hotel Thief
(Sammy Keyes, #1-20)
by Wendelin Van Draanen

The Ghost Belonged to Me
by Richard Peck

The Mysterious Benedict Society (and all
The Mysterious Benedict Society series)
by Trenton Lee Stewart

The Case of the Missing Marquess
(and all the Enola Holmes Mysteries)
by Nancy Springer

The Ghost in the Tokaido Inn
by Dorothy & Thomas Hoobler
For Dads on Long Drives: Two Voices to Die For

A Delicate Truth, John Le Carré’s blazingly good literary thriller read by the master himself. His brilliance on audio is as formidable as his writing skills.

– Penguin Audio, $39.95 (Compact Disc)

Let’s Explore Diabetes with Owls, David Sedaris’s side-splitting new essays read by the man who so loves to laugh at his own humor. Even funnier than the book!

– Little, Brown & Company, $29.98 (Compact Disc)

INKSLINGER’S INKSLINGERS
Anne Brillinger        Anne Holman
Betsy Burton          Wendy Foster Leigh
Kathy Ashton           Paula Longhurst
Barbara Hoagland       Margaret Brennan Neville

Armchair Travel Mystery Book Group

Meets 3rd Tuesday of the month, 7 p.m. at TKE

June: City of Veils, Zoë Ferraris (Saudi Arabia)
July: The Potter’s Field, Andrea Camilleri (Italy)
August: The Cove, Ron Rash (West Virginia)