

BETWEEN THE LINES

Tess Gerritsen kicks off the Bee Book Club's year

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Last year was a thrilling one – literally and figuratively – for the Sacramento Bee Book Club and its partners, the Sacramento Public Library and Barnes & Noble Booksellers, and the 2,500-plus fans who attended the free series of author appearances at the Tsakopoulos Library Galleria.

The book club hosted Kelly Corrigan (“Glitter and Glue”), Anne Perry (“Death On Blackheath”), Joyce Maynard (“After Her”), Cara Black (“Murder In Pigalle”), Catriona McPherson (“Dandy Gilver and a Bothersome Number of Corpses”), Rhys Bowen (“City of Darkness and Light”), Terry Shames (“The Last Death of Jack Harbin), Hampton Sides (“In the Kingdom of Ice”), Jodi Picoult (“Leaving Time”) and Aquanetta Gordon (“Echoes of an Angel”).

The program will return Feb. 19 when New York Times best-selling medical-thriller novelist Tess Gerritsen comes to Sacramento. In her new novel, “Die Again,” Boston medical examiner Dr. Maura Isles and homicide detective Jane Rizzoli are off on a strange case that puts their lives in greater danger than ever before.

For starters, the crime-solving duo is mystified by what they find at a bizarre crime scene: A big-

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game hunter/taxidermist appears to have been the victim of a leopard attack in his own apartment, a murder that is soon followed by similar homicides.

The key to finding the killer could be in Africa, where a few years earlier a homicidal maniac had murdered all but one of the tourists on a safari. Could

the sole survivor of that massacre have any leads on the killer, who may now be stalking the streets of Boston?

The tension ratchets up under the skilled hand of Gerritsen, whose 11 “Rizzoli & Isles” novels inspired the ongoing TNT cable-network series.

Gerritsen studied anthropology at Stanford University and later got an M.D. at UC San Francisco. When she was an intern at a Honolulu hospital, a patient handed her a stack of romance novels. Gerritsen made quick work of them and then wrote her own, “Adventure’s Mistress” (1985). Later, she gave up her medical practice (and romance novels) to spend time with her children and to write medical thrillers. Her bibliography also includes 13 stand-alone titles, including the best-selling “The Bone Garden” and “Harvest.”

“I don’t plot out a lot of stuff,” she told The Bee in an interview a few years ago. “I start out with an idea and see what happens next. I let the plot take over. The biggest drama is the conflict. Every chapter has some level of it.”

Also coming to the Bee Book Club this year (so far) will be Western novelist C.J. Box for his Joe Pickett series (March 19), biographer-historian H.W. Brands for “Reagan: The Life” (June 11), and thriller novelist James Rollins of El Dorado Hills for “The Bone Labyrinth” (July 16).

Upcoming author events

Jack Parker for “The Valley of Tranquility” and his four-title “Adventure” series, 1 p.m. Saturday at Barnes & Noble, 1256 Galleria Blvd., Roseville; (916) 788-4320.

Debbi Preston for “48 Dog-Friendly Trails” and “Dog-Friendly Trails for All Seasons,” 6:30 p.m. Jan. 15 at the California Welcome Center, 2085 Vine Street, El Dorado Hills, (916) 358-3700.

For Jane Austen fans

The Sacramento Public Library’s “Notable Books” program has good news for Jane Austen fans. Two Austen experts – retired Sacramento State English professor David Bell, who taught graduate seminars on Austen for 40 years, and Sierra College instructor Rachel Dodge – will give presentations on the Austen novel “Mansfield Park,” celebrating its bicentennial. They will be joined by actors Ryan Snyder and Jamie Kale, who will perform scenes from the play “Lovers’ Vows,” which furthers the plot of the book. The sessions will be at 3 p.m. Jan. 25 and Feb. 22 at the Central Library, 828 I St., Sacramento, (916) 264-2700, www.saclibrary.org.

Caught our attention

Let’s randomly take some titles off the bookshelves and see what catches the eye:

■ Chinese author Guan Moye has written plenty of social commentary disguised as fiction, under the ironic pseudonym “Mo Yan,” which translates to “don’t speak.” Along the way he picked up the 2012 Nobel Prize for literature for his body of work (11 novels), most pointedly for “Red Sorghum Clan” and “Life and Death Are



Wearing Me Out.” His new novel is “Frog,” which confronts China’s one-child policy with his typical dark humor, insight and subtle criticism (Viking, \$28, 400 pages).

■ The American River Natural History Association in Carmichael has combined lyrical and dramatic color pictures from local photographers, with reflective and informative text by Peter J. Hayes to produce a journey through nature. “An American River Almanac” explores the seasons along the river with gratifying results (\$40, 160 pages).

■ Sure, the Secret Service has been in a well-publicized world of embarrassment lately, but its agents still have great stories to tell. Investigative reporter Ronald Kessler got some of them to share for “The First Family Detail: Secret Service Agents Reveal the Hidden Lives of Presidents” (Crown Forum, \$26, 272 pages). Like the time Nixon ... Or that incident with Clinton ... Or when Michelle said to Barack ...

■ In “The Devil In Montmartre” by Gary Inbinder, the Paris Ripper is on a tear during the 1889 Universal Exposition in Paris, so Inspector Achille Lefebvre turns to the new science of “forensics” to narrow the list of suspects (Pegasus, \$26, 352 pages). Fittingly, the author is a member of the Historical Novel Society and the Bewildering Stories Editorial Review Board.

■ Marilyn Johnson wondered what archaeologists do, so she spent time with a bunch of them and wrote “Lives In Ruins: Archaeologists and the Seductive

Lure of Human Rubble” (Harper, \$26, 288 pages). The research sounds like fun: She traveled from the Caribbean to the Mediterranean, “up mountains, onto military bases and behind crime-scene tape,” learning about mummies, Ice Age hunters, women warriors and, yes, even King Midas.

■ In “Unlikely Heroes,” Jennifer S. Holland tells 37 “inspiring stories of courage and heart” that focus on heroics in the animal kingdom (Workman, \$14, 256 pages). For instance, a pod of dolphins saved swimmers from a great white shark, and a cat rescued her kittens from a raging house fire.

Call The Bee’s Allen Pierleoni, (916) 321-1128. Follow him on Twitter @apierleonisache.

BEE BOOK CLUB

Tess Gerritsen will give her Bee Book Club presentation at 6 p.m. Feb. 19 at the Tsakopoulos Library Galleria, 828 I St., Sacramento (doors open at 5:15 p.m.). It’s a free event, but tickets are required. They are available now (limited to two per person) at www.beebuzzpoints.com. Look for more details in the Feb. 17 Living Here section. Information: (916) 321-1128.

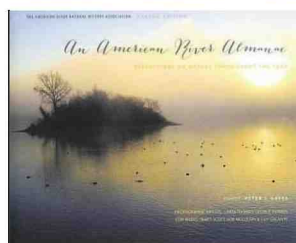
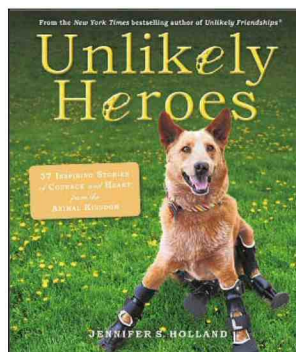
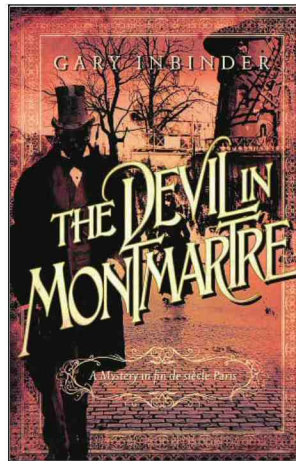
“Die Again” (Ballantine, \$27, 352 pages) is being offered at a 30 percent discount now through Feb. 19 at these bookstores: Barnes & Noble, Avid Reader at the Tower in Sacramento, Avid Reader in Davis, Face in a Book in El Dorado Hills, Time Tested Books, Underground Books, Hornet Bookstore at California State University, Sacra-

mento, the UC Davis Bookstore and the Bookseller in Grass Valley.

Visit the author at www.tessgerritsen.com.

LET US KNOW

If you have information on author appearances or other book-related special events, email it to bookmarks@sacbee.com at least two weeks before the event. To read the online calendar, go to www.sacbee.com/books. Questions? Call The Bee’s Allen Pierleoni, (916) 321-1128.





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Author Tess Gerritsen will appear at the Feb. 19 Bee Book Club event.