Calling all readers! Share your love of reading with others with a book review

By Carole Kelly

The next best thing to reading a spellbinding or a fair-to-middling book for me is discussing the book with a friend or fellow-reader enthusiast. Presented with the opportunity to write a book review by *The Clinton Courier*, several future reviewers are waiting in the wings to write a review of their books of choice. We want to hear from you!

Speaking of or reviewing a favorite book, one doesn't want to – and shouldn't - share too much, but I love to draw a prospective reader into the possibility of giving a favored book or author a try and finding it as intriguing as I did. Then we can talk about it.

Tastes and opinions vary, of course, and what I rave about as favorites no doubt elicit responses of either "Oh, yes" or "Wouldn't think of reading that" or "What are you thinking?"

Looking over my list of titles in past days, Delia Owens' *Where the Crawdads Sing* is a stunning story, for me a different but "quick, turn-the-page" story. The beginning was startling but had me hooked from the first, and I didn't want to put the book down. A friend shared that it was a turnoff right off the bat for her. I was intrigued as to where Delia Owens was going with the story of a family in a different environment from anything I was familiar with.

I've often remembered a long-ago response from a reader who stated after finishing Anya Seton's historical mystery *Green Darkness*, "Reading anything after Green Darkness will be like eating melba toast after having pizza." A fine review sentence.

The absolute top title for me and many other readers recently has been *A Gentleman in Moscow*, by Amor Towles. I got the book from my therapist, who gave it a hearty recommendation. He did not want the book back; it took him some time to finish it, with a vacation helping the process. I happily added it to my home library, not hesitating to loan it to friends, of course. Joining Count Alexander Rostov in his life at the grand hotel Metropol, I found the allusions to Russian history depicted in the story even more interesting than I did when I was enjoying *Anastasia*, movie or play. Meet and get to know and admire Count Rostov, a young man caught up in history and sentenced to life in the hotel. Feel like you are there with him and the many interesting people who become a part of his life. Feel sad when you finish wandering through the hotel with the Count. Next on my must-read list is A. Towles' 2021 release, *The Lincoln Highway*.

Phaedra Patrick's *The Curious Charms of Arthur Pepper* is a charming story about an English widower's adventures as he unravels an intriguing mystery. Lee Strobel's *The Case for a Creator* was a challenging read for me but a wonderful affirmation about Creation.

A fellow reader in a North Mississippi book club that chose Joseph J. Ellis's *Revolutionary Summer* was not impressed with the story of *The Birth of American Independence* (subtitle). I got into the trials and tribulations of the revolutionary summer: reading about how Washington and his straggling, struggling army facing the mighty British fleet were so beaten in New York made me catch my breath at the thought of what a miracle this country is.

Favorite authors taking me to different parts of the country and the world with their vivid characters include Elin Hilderbrand, Ann Tyler, Irish writer-journalist Maeve Binchy, and Florida journalist-novelist Carl Hiassen.

Back to home territory, with a need to read and need to know: Jerry Mitchell's *Race Against Time* is a must read, as he details the background and results of his intensive investigative reporting about painful civil rights times in Mississippi history.

Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet is a book that I've begun and plan to finish, partly because Caroline Hoff recommended it. The plot concerns the forced evacuation of Japanese Americans to camps in World War II.

Good mystery stories to keep me viable in the "Hour to Kill" Book Club naturally include the Agatha Christie perennial favorites and those by Joanne Fluke, who stirs in a murder or two intertwined with recipes, as in *The Twelve Desserts of Christmas*." Read a book, bake some cookies.

Joedda Gore, a writer/playwright herself, is an avid reader who will be sharing her thoughts about another local author in an upcoming review.

Book club members or independent readers: Are you reading a book that you want to share your thoughts about? Write a review of 300-450 words, and email it to me, Carole Kelly, at Submissions@TheClintonCourier.net.

If your review is selected to run in a future print issue of *The Clinton Courier*, you'll be rewarded with a prize from your hometown paper! All ages are welcome and encouraged to submit reviews, just please keep them family-friendly!

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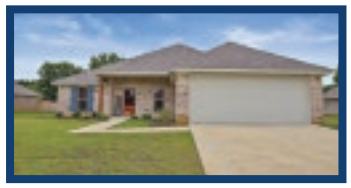

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