

# Books

FICTION • NONFICTION • POETRY • TRENDS

Sunday, September 19, 2010

## TOP 10

### LOCAL

Books-A-Million  
best-sellers, Aug. 14

#### HARDCOVER

1. "The Girl Who Kicked the Hornet's Nest" by Stieg Larsson, Reg Kestland
2. "The Postcard Killers" by James Patterson, Lisa Marklund
3. "No Mercy" by Sherilyn Kenyon
4. "The Power" by Rhonda Byrne
5. "The Help" by Kathryn Stockett
6. "Getting to Happy" by Terry McMillan
7. "Star Island" by Carl Hiaasen
8. "Lost Empire" by Clive Cussler, Grant Blackwood
9. "Freedom" by Jonathan Franzen
10. "The Red Queen" by Philippa Gregory

#### PAPERBACKS

1. "Eat Pray Love: One Woman's Search for Everything Across Italy, India and Indonesia" by Elizabeth Gilbert
2. "The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo" by Stieg Larsson
3. "The Girl Who Played With Fire" by Stieg Larsson
4. "Crazy Love: Overwhelmed by a Relentless God" by Francis Chan, Danae Yanokski
5. "The Shack" by William P. Young
6. "Little Bee" by Chris Cleave
7. "South of Broad" by Pat Conroy
8. "My Horizontal Life: A Collection of One-Night Stands" by Chelsea Handler
9. "Three Cups of Tea: One Man's Mission to Promote Peace...One School at a Time" by Greg Mortenson, David Oliver Reelin
10. "Same Kind of Different as Me: A Modern-Day Slave, an International Art Dealer, and the Unlikely Woman Who Bound Them Together" by Ron Hall, Denver Moore, Lynn Vincent

### NATIONAL

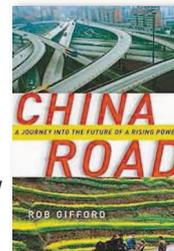
Key: F-Fiction; NF-Nonfiction; H-Hardcover; P-Paperback

1. "The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo" by Stieg Larsson (Vintage) (F-P)
2. "The Girl Who Played With Fire" by Stieg Larsson (Vintage) (F-P)
3. "Mockingjay" by Suzanne Collins (Scholastic) (F-H)
4. "102 Evergreen Place: A Cedar Cove Novel" by Debbie Macomber (Mira) (F-P)
5. "The Girl Who Kicked the Hornet's Nest" by Stieg Larsson (Knopf) (F-H)
6. "Eat, Pray, Love" by Elizabeth Gilbert (Penguin) (NF-P)
7. "Freedom: A Novel" by Jonathan Franzen (Farrar, Straus & Giroux) (F-H)
8. "The Hunger Games" by Suzanne Collins (Scholastic Press) (F-P)
9. "The Grand Deception" by Stephen Hawking and Leonard Mlodinow (Bantam) (F-H)
10. "No Mercy" by Sherilyn Kenyon (St. Martin's Press) (F-H)
11. "Ford County: Stories" by John Grisham (Dell) (F-P)
12. "The Scarpetta Factor" by Patricia Cornwell (Berkeley) (F-P)
13. "Catching Fire" by Suzanne Collins (Scholastic Press) (F-H)
14. "The Postcard Killers" by James Patterson and Lisa Marklund (Little, Brown) (F-H)
15. "Part of the Bargain" by Linda Lael Miller (Harlequin Special Releases) (F-P)
16. "True Blue" by David Baldacci (Vision) (F-P)
17. "Spartan Gold" by Clive Cussler and Grant Blackwood (Berkeley) (F-P)

Source: USA Today

## 'China Road' author to appear at Elon

NPR correspondent Rob Gifford will discuss his book, "China Road," at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday in Elon University's Alumni Gymnasium. "China Road," selected as the 2010-11 Elon Common Reading, recounts Gifford's 3,000-mile journey across China's Route 312. Admission: \$12 or Elon ID. Information: 278-7660.



# H6

For more Books features, go to News-Record.com

## CITY of BANKS

How the financial meltdown put a spotlight on Charlotte's image

By ANDREW BROD  
Special to the News & Record

As the Great Recession of 2008-09 slowly shrinks in our rear-view mirror, the role played by financial deregulation is becoming clearer. New financial regulation has been put into place, much as was done in the 1930s, in the wake of the last recession to be triggered by a financial crisis.

Depression-era financial regulation was a constant for a generation or so, and the financial sector was a fairly unexciting and low-risk place. But eventually those constraints were loosened and the financial sector grew, and grew more interesting.

Interstate branch banking became easier and the wall between commercial and investment banking was lowered. Finance became more important to a U.S. economy coping with structural change, most notably the decline of manufacturing employment. As wages stagnated, households came to depend on non-wage earnings, which fueled asset bubbles in the late 1990s and mid-2000s.

The story of Charlotte's major banks, as recounted in Rick Rothacker's excellent and readable history, "Banktown: The Rise and Struggles of Charlotte's Big Banks," is framed by this gradual easing of regulation and the corresponding increase in systemic risk. The focus is on the banks that eventually became Bank of America and Wachovia, the latter of which was acquired by Wells Fargo in the midst of the financial and banking crisis of late 2008.

Rothacker is a reporter for The Charlotte Observer, and his beat since 2001 has been the banking industry. His reporting serves as the basis for the book. Rothacker introduces us to the major players, explains the history and significance of relevant banking laws and describes the ar-

### WANT TO READ IT?

"Banktown: The Rise and Struggles of Charlotte's Big Banks" by Rick Rothacker (John F. Blair Publisher, 336 pages, \$26.95 hardcover)



### MEET THE AUTHOR

Rothacker will appear at Barnes & Noble stores this week — 7 p.m. Wednesday in Greensboro at Friendly Center and 7 p.m. Thursday in Winston-Salem at 1925 Hampton Inn Court across from Hanes Mall.

came financial instruments on which the banking industry increasingly relied for profits.

Most importantly, he recounts the arc of events leading up to and during the financial crisis of 2008, which drove the economy into its deepest recession since the 1930s and rocked the city of Charlotte. The Charlotte banks didn't invent subprime mortgages or mortgage-backed securities, but they played the new financial game as aggressively as their New York counterparts, and they got burned as badly. As a result, the fate of the two dynamic Sunbelt banks was thrown into the hands of Washington regulators and New York and San Francisco bankers.

Rothacker gives us a brief history lesson on the evolution of Charlotte as a banking center. We learn about First Union's predecessor institution, Union National Bank, founded in 1908, and the 1927 establishment in Charlotte of a branch of the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond. We learn how North Carolina banking

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## Tender mercies in coming of age tale

By CHARLES WHEELER  
Staff Writer

In Steve Cushman's new novel, a 15-year-old boy strolls down a sidewalk in Greensboro holding hands with his mother. Had I done that at 15, my mother would have called Duke Hospital as soon as we got back to the house and made an appointment with a therapist.

I can't easily grasp a ready, self-conscious teenage boy holding hands with his mother.

But the main character in Greensboro resident Cushman's new novel "Heart with Joy" makes a practice of this when he's around his mom, which isn't often. Well, OK, he's not a typical teenager.

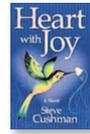
This is Cushman's second novel. His first, "Portisville," won the 2004 Novello Literary Award, which is sponsored by the Public Library of Charlotte & Mecklenburg County. His short story collection, "Fracture City," was published in 2008. Cushman holds an MFA in creative writing from UNCG and, for the past 16 years, has worked as an X-ray technologist. He's on the staff at Moses Cone Memorial Hospital.

Reading this novel, I tried to bear in mind that Tolstoy zinger: "All happy families are alike; each unhappy family is unhappy in its own way." It applies to this fictional family. They're not the Brady Bunch, but still they don't behave in the selfish, raggedy ways I have come to believe are the norm for most people.

The carpet is yanked, wall to wall, from under Julian Hale's life when his mother moves out. Her explanation? She's off to Florida to run her parents' motel and finish her novel, the one she's been writing for years and years. Right. Neither Julian nor his dad buys that.

Julian is to stay on in Greensboro with his dad, a nurse at Moses Cone. They aren't the best of buddies. They hardly know each other anymore. Julian plans to visit his mom when school's out at

### WANT TO READ IT?



"Heart with Joy" (Canterbury House Publishing, 182 pages, \$14.95 paperback)

## One City, One Book meshes themes from 'Soloist'

Imagine how proud you would feel if you had a brother who was a musical prodigy — so talented that he is selected to study at Juilliard, the most prestigious music school in the nation, the same school that musicians such as Yo-Yo Ma, Renée Fleming and Phillip Glass attended.

Jennifer Ayers-Moore has just such a brother. She remembers him as the brother who "watched out for his sisters after their father left, who helped his younger sibling with her homework, who was charming, intelligent, talented and handsome."

But in his third year at Juilliard, something went terribly wrong for this young, African American man whose greatest dream in life was to become a professional bassist in a great symphony orchestra. One night, while hanging out



STEVE SUMNERFORD  
Decimal Points

with some of his friends, he started taking his clothes off for no apparent reason. His friends were shocked and afraid. They didn't know what to do, so they called the police.

A few hours later he was locked up in the mental ward of Bellevue Hospital. Diagnosis: schizophrenia.

Though he was only 21 years old, his dream had ended. In and out of treatment for years, he eventually ended up homeless, like thousands of people in this country who are living with a serious mental illness.

Jennifer's brother, Nathaniel Ayers, is the subject of "The Soloist: A Lost Dream, An Unlikely Friendship, and the Redemptive Power of Music." This book, by Los Angeles Times columnist Steve Lopez, is the 2010 One City, One Book selection. In addition to book discussions, concerts, films and plays, one of the highlights of this project, sponsored by the Friends of the Greensboro Public Library, is a guest appearance by Jennifer Ayers-Moore, founder of the Nathaniel Anthony Ayers Foundation. With a brother made famous by a best-selling book and major motion picture, Ayers-Moore is now touring the country to discuss the stigma associated with mental illness and its effects on entire families.

For years, she didn't know where her brother was or if he was even alive, but she never lost hope that she would see him again one day. We can only imagine the joy she felt the day she received a call from Steve Lopez saying that he had befriended Nathaniel Ayers and wanted to write a series of articles about the Skid Row "Violin Man." Eventually, Lopez wrote a book, "The Soloist," which was

### WANT TO READ IT?

"The Soloist: A Lost Dream, an Unlikely Friendship, and the Redemptive Power of Music" by Steve Lopez (Penguin, 304 pages, \$10.80, paperback)



then made into a Hollywood movie starring Jamie Foxx and Robert Downey Jr.

When people ask me why the library selected this book for the 2010 One City, One Book, I often find myself spouting a list of themes — homelessness, mental illness, music, the arts, journalism — themes about which I knew we could

See 'Soloist,' Page H5

BOOKS

'BOB DYLAN IN AMERICA'

A conversation with the biographer

By KEVIN CANFIELD  
San Francisco Chronicle

**NEW YORK** — In "Bob Dylan in America," Sean Wilentz notes that "the number of serious studies of Dylan's work has grown large enough to constitute a small library." But the author's personal proximity to his subject makes this book hard to ignore.

A Princeton history professor, he's also the historian-in-residence for BobDylan.com (whatever that means — even Wilentz isn't sure). Wilentz is coy about his relationship with Dylan, but he's more forthcoming about his longtime fandom. As a teen, he attended Dylan's 1964 Philharmonic Hall concert in Manhattan (Wilentz's liner notes for the recording, finally released in 2004, were nominated for a Grammy), and his family owned a Greenwich Village bookshop that Dylan frequented during his early years in New York.



An early but undated publicity photo shows Bob Dylan in New York City. The Associated Press

WHAT TO READ IT?

"Bob Dylan in America" by Sean Wilentz (Doubleday, 300 pages, \$28.95 hardback)



Over lunch, Wilentz talked about his lively, sweeping new book. The interview has been edited for length.

In a way, this is a personal story. When you were a kid, in the early '60s, Dylan browsed at the Eighth Street Bookshop, which was owned by your uncle and your father. What is your earliest Dylan memory?

I remember Izzy Young, the head of the Folklore Center, talking to my dad about Dylan. I remember being introduced to his work by a girl in my Sunday School class in Brooklyn. I remember her speaking of "The Freewheelin' Bob Dylan" as if this was scripture, not the stuff that we were supposed to be reading in class. But I don't remember seeing him until the (1964) concert.

You were 13 at the time. How did you end up there?

My dad got a couple free tickets. He was performing mostly in clubs at that point, and I was too young to go to clubs.

You wrote about that show many years after the fact. Looking back, do you recall feeling that you'd seen something special?

I recall the feeling that I'd seen something that I didn't

understand. To the ushers, we must've all looked like a monolithic horde, but there were many different stratiations of Dylan's following even then. There were Old Left people who were there to hear the folk music (inspired by) Woody Guthrie. There were Village hipsters — Allen Ginsberg and Gregory Corso. Looking back, there were some familiar songs. I think he led off with "The Times They Are a-Changin'." In the first set, he played songs that few people could have ever heard before, and they were very complicated. He played "Gates of Eden" and "It's All Right Ma (I'm Only Bleeding)." Those are very hard to understand the first time through. We were all puzzling them out.

63, in your uncle's apartment above the family bookstore. Dec. 26, 1963. In the book you write that Dylan and Ginsberg eventually "helped each other complete transitions into new phases of their careers."

By the time he comes to record his next album in June (1964) his language and his sensibility is much closer to that of the Beat writers, even though he'd been reading the Beats since he was a teenager. Helen Vendler, a great critic, wrote that Ginsberg "loosen(ed) the breath of American poetry." And I think he really loosened Dylan's breath.

The Beats placed a lot of importance on primary experience. Primary experience is also important in this book — you write about the '64 concert, a 1975 New Haven performance of Dylan's Rolling Thunder Revue and what was sort of a homecoming at the Newport Folk Festival in 2002. How do those voices — the historian and the memoirist — work together?

It was tricky, because I couldn't leave myself out, but I also wanted to convey some historian's authority. There are no exposés here; this is not

my agent, Andrew Wylie, just published a piece in the Harvard magazine, and he talks about a bookstore he had in which he had the most off-the-wall-books — religion, history — just whatever struck his fancy. He said he had only two customers: John Cage and Bob Dylan.

He's still touring nonstop. 90 shows a year. Why does he spend so much time on the road?

He likes living in a bus, as far as I can make out. He loves playing music with his band. I think he thinks of himself as a performing artist (more than) a recording artist.

How did you become historian-in-residence for Bob Dylan, and what exactly does it mean?

That's a good question. If you get the answer, let me know. In 2001, I got a phone call from a guy representing Dylan's website. They asked me to write an essay about "Love and Theft." I said, "Send me the record. If I like it, fine. If I don't like it, find somebody else." I liked the record, they liked the essay, so we arranged to have it posted on his website the day of the release of the record, which happened to be Sept. 11, 2001. I was at my computer, feeding this thing in to go online when I got told, go to the TV set. The record is just full of apocalyptic imagery. The song "High Water (for Charlie Patton)" has a line: "Coffins dropping in the street/Like balloons made out of lead." It's so direct.

How much contact do you have with Dylan himself?

That I don't talk about.

CALENDAR

- TODAY**  
Margaret Norton, 2-4 p.m. Barnhill's Books, 811 Burke St., Winston-Salem. Author of "When Ties Break: A Memoir About How to Thrive After Loss." 602-1383.  
Dorothy O'Neill, 2 p.m. Barnes & Noble, 3102 Northline Ave., Greensboro. Author of "Caught Dead." 854-4200.
- TUESDAY**  
Carol Kenny, 7 p.m. Barnes & Noble, 3102 Northline Ave., Greensboro. Author of "St. Mary's Well." 854-4200.  
Rob Gifford, 7:30 p.m. Alumni Gymnasium, Haggard Avenue, Elon University, Elon. Author of "China Road." 512-278-7660.  
Jenny Nelson, 7 p.m. Barnes & Noble, 1925 Hampton Inn Court, Winston-Salem. Author of "Georgia's Kitchen." 774-0800.

- WEDNESDAY**  
Rick Rothacker, 7 p.m. Barnes & Noble, 3102 Northline Ave., Greensboro. Author of "Banktown: The Rise and Struggles of Charlotte's Big Banks." 854-4200.
- THURSDAY**  
Rick Rothacker, 7 p.m. Barnes & Noble, 1925 Hampton Inn Court, Winston-Salem. Author of "Banktown: The Rise and Struggles of Charlotte's Big Banks." 774-0800.
- FRIDAY**  
Chris Hartley, 7 p.m. Barnes & Noble, 1925 Hampton Inn Court, Winston-Salem. Author of "Stoneman's Raid 1865." 854-4200.
- SATURDAY**  
Jenny Nelson, 11 a.m. McIntyre's Books, Fearington Village, U.S. 64, Pittsboro. Author of "Georgia's Kitchen." www.fearington.com. (919) 542-3030.  
John Schulz, 2-5 p.m. Barnhill's Books, 811 Burke St., Winston-Salem. Author of "Requiem for a Redneck." 602-1383.

- SEPT. 26**  
Janet Gallagher Nestor, 2-4 p.m. Barnhill's Books, 811 Burke St., Winston-Salem. Author of "Pathways to Wholeness." 602-1383.  
Susan Kelly, 3 p.m. Sept. 26. Q. Henry Hotel, 624 Green Valley Road, Greensboro. Author of "By Accident." 373-3617.  
Binka Le Breton, 2 p.m. Barnes & Noble, 3125 Waltham Blvd., Alamance Crossing, Burlington. Author of "Where the Road Ends: A Home in the Brazilian Rainforest." 584-0869.

- North Carolina Poetry Society Series**, 2 p.m. McIntyre's Books, Fearington Village, U.S. 64, Pittsboro. With Scott Owens and Alex Grant. www.fearington.com. (919) 542-3030.  
Lan Tasta, 2 p.m. Barnes & Noble, 3102 Northline Ave., Greensboro. Author of "The Unofficial Guide to Walt Disney World 2011" and "The Unofficial Guide to Walt Disney World with Kids 2011." 854-4200.  
**OCT. 2**  
Daphne Athas, 11 a.m. McIntyre's Books, Fearington Village, U.S. 64, Pittsboro. Author of "Chapel Hill in Plain Sight: Notes from the Other Side of the Tracks." www.fearington.com. (919) 542-3030.

One City, One Book Events

The One City, One Book selection for 2010 is "The Soloist: A Lost Dream, an Unlikely Friendship, and the Redemptive Power of Music" by Los Angeles Times columnist Steve Lopez. It is the story of the relationship that develops between the journalist and Nathaniel Ayers, a classically trained musician who Lopez saw playing a two-string violin on Los Angeles' skid row. A partial calendar of events planned for this year's program, which is sponsored by Friends of the Greensboro Public Library:

BOOK DISCUSSIONS

**October** — There also will be facilitated discussions of "The Soloist" at all Greensboro Public Library locations throughout October. Various community groups will also be hosting discussions. For the complete calendar, go to www.greensboropubliclibrary.org.  
**Nov. 10, 8 a.m.-9 a.m.** — Allen Johnson, editorial page editor for the News & Record, and Tim Rice, president and CEO of Moses Cone Health System, will share their thoughts and lead a discussion of "The Soloist." Greensboro Historical Museum. Limited seating. RSVP to Steve Sumerford at 373-3636 or steve.sumerford@greensboro-nc.gov by Nov. 1.

SELECTED PROGRAMS

For the complete calendar, go to www.greensboropubliclibrary.org.  
**Sept. 23, noon-2 p.m.** — One City, One Book Kickoff, "Toons at Noon." Center City Park, downtown Greensboro.  
**Oct. 5, 7:45 p.m.** — "The Stigma of Mental Illness." Glenwood Branch Library.  
**Oct. 12-17** — Touring Theatre of North Carolina presents an adaptation of "The Soloist." UpStage Cabaret at Triad Stage. 8 p.m. Matinee on Sunday, Oct. 17 at 2 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 12, is pay-what-you-can. All other performances are \$7.50 Call (336) 272-0160 to reserve your seat.  
**Oct. 18, 7 p.m.** — Poetry on the themes of "The Soloist." Marta Richardson will provide violin accompaniment. Central Library.  
**Oct. 20, 6-7 p.m.** — Jennifer Ayers



Moore

War Memorial Auditorium.  
**Oct. 20, 7:30 p.m.** — Free performance (dress rehearsal) of the Greensboro Symphony Orchestra featuring cellist Julie Albers. War Memorial Auditorium.  
**Oct. 21 at 7:30 p.m.** — "Moscow Nights." The Greensboro Symphony explores the redemptive power of music through works by Mussorgsky, Shostakovich and Tchaikovsky. Featuring Julie Albers, playing the cello, the same instrument that helped Nathaniel Ayers find a way to deal with his own mental illness and overcome difficulties of homelessness. War Memorial Auditorium. Also Oct. 23, 8 p.m. Dana Auditorium at Guilford College. Tickets: 335-

5456 ext. 224 or Coliseum Box Office, ticketmaster.com or www.greensborosymphony.org  
**Oct. 27, 12:30-3:30 p.m.** — Music Academy of North Carolina. Student Showcase Recitals featuring themes from "The Soloist." Information: Call Shana DiCamillo, 379-8748, ext. 112.

FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

**Sept. 28, 4-4:45 p.m.** — "Everyone Needs a Place to Call Home," a look at homelessness through a conversation with someone who has been there. Glenwood Branch  
**Sept. 29, 4 p.m.** — "The Lady in the Box." Stories and a discussion about homelessness. Grades K-5. McGarr-Horton Branch.  
**Oct. 4, 3:30 p.m.** — "Kids Care: A Drop-in Program about Homelessness." Hear stories and help plan a container garden for a woman's shelter. Make "Lulus Project" stitcheless blankets for children in need. Kathleen Clay Edwards Family Branch  
**Oct. 5, 12, 19 and 26, 4-5 p.m.** — "How to Steal a Dog" by Barbara O'Connor. Discussion of the themes of homelessness, individual value and the appreciation of differences in others. Art activities, games, special guests for grades 4-8. Hemphill Branch.

EXHIBITS

**Oct. 8-Dec. 10** — "What I Keep: Photographs of the New Face of Homelessness and Poverty" by Susan Mullally Hege Library Art Gallery, Guilford College. Gallery hours: Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m., Sunday, 2-5 p.m.

FILM SERIES

Free showing of more than 25 films (for the complete listing, go to www.greensboropubliclibrary.org).  
**Sept. 23, 2:30 p.m.** — "The Soloist." Kathleen Clay Edwards Family Branch.  
**Sept. 24, 7 p.m.** — "Homeless in America," documentary. Central Library.  
**Sept. 28, 7 p.m.** — "The Devil and Daniel Johnston," a documentary about music, art, and mental illness. Hemphill Branch.  
**Oct. 3, 3 p.m.** — "Brushes With Life" and "Homeless in America," documentaries. Benjamin Branch.  
**Oct. 6, 7 p.m.** — "Dark Days," on the homeless who live in the tunnels beneath Penn Station in New York. Hemphill Branch.  
**Oct. 12 at 7 p.m.** — "The Cats of Mirikitani," a documentary about a feisty painter living on the street near the World Trade Center when 9/11 devastates the neighborhood. Hemphill Branch.  
**Oct. 16, 1 p.m.** — "Harlem Aria." Hemphill Branch.  
**Oct. 17, 3 p.m.** — "Living Museum," a documentary about an art studio in Queens dedicated to presenting the art produced by patients at the Creedmore Psychiatric Center. Benjamin Branch.  
**Oct. 28, 7 p.m.** — "The Pursuit of Happiness." Vance Chavis Branch.  
**Oct. 28, 7 p.m.** — "Proof." Literati Society. Hemphill Branch.  
**Nov. 3 p.m.** — "Gif Interrupted." Based on writer Susanna Kaysen's account of her 18-month stay at a mental hospital in the 1960s. Hemphill Branch.  
**Nov. 9, 7 p.m.** — "The Saint of Fort Washington Matthew." Hemphill Branch.

'Soloist'

Continued from Page H6

organize some engaging programs.

But, more than anything, it is his bond with Lopez and its power to change two men's lives. In fact, as Lopez struggles to help Ayers, he becomes frustrated that he cannot find a medical solution.

Finally, a doctor tells him that Ayers is going to get better; it won't be because of a correct diagnosis, but it will be because of their friendship. It will be because he has developed enough trust in Lopez and others that he decides to pursue his own recovery.

Lopez is almost incredulous, for he feels that it is he, not Ayers, who is benefiting from this unlikely friendship. In that sense, it may be the most hopeful book we have ever selected for our biennial One City, One Book project.

Like any project that would be both educational and entertaining, the library staff organized a coalition of more than 25 organizations, including the county's leading mental health agencies, music schools, orchestras, colleges and organizations serving the homeless community. This group has spent the past six months developing an extensive menu of programs for children as well as adults.

The group quickly decided that one goal of the project would be to educate the city about mental health issues. Anne Kimball, community relations manager for The Guilford Center, believes that the One City, One Book

discussions, programs and community education events, planned by The Guilford Center, the Mental Health Association in Greensboro and the Guilford chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness, will give participants an opportunity to reflect on their own beliefs about mental health and mental illness.

"Far too often the stigma associated with having a mental illness has prevented people from both seeking care and support and from advancing recovery within their own life and community," she says. Kimball underscores what Lopez learned, as he struggled to understand why people with mental illnesses do not seek treatment. "Stigma keeps families from accepting a loved one's illness and seeking treatment for them," he says. "It also marginalizes those who are afflicted."

One City, One Book only happens once every two years. Thousands of our neighbors, coworkers and friends who participated in previous One City, One Book projects say that they find it meaningful to be part of something that brings the entire community together. Each time, as we all come together to discuss a book, we become more connected to each other and more committed to creating a community that respects and celebrates its rich diversity.

Decimal Points is a regular column contributed by the Greensboro Public Library. Steve Sumerford (steve.sumerford@greensboro-nc.gov) is assistant director of the library.

Mercies

Continued from Page H6  
Grimsley High and remained in Florida. He hasn't shared this with dad.  
Julian is a momma's boy. He admits it. Her absence puts him in a spin. His dad grows even more distant, working long hours at the hospital, then shutting himself in his bedroom. The household wobbles without mom.  
Meals quickly become a problem. Take-outs aren't so hot every day. So, Julian becomes a serious Food Network fan.  
Soon, he's back in that kitchen where he spent so many happy hours with mom, rattling those pots and pans himself. It's the start of the growth spurt for this coming-of-age novel.  
He has a talent for preparing food. It becomes a recipe for reaching out to others — first, dad behind the bedroom door, and then, Tia, the teenage cashier at the grocery where he shops on Saturdays. It's almost love at first bite.  
What Julian learned at Grimsley during the school

term the novel covers couldn't come close to matching what he learned outside class: the nature of love, friendship, responsibility, old age, death and the courage to follow your heart.  
Am I boring you?  
The narrative is straightforward. Don't look for smoke and mirrors here, not even in the kitchen. You won't find them.  
Here's Julian on page 100, musing about the death of an elderly neighbor who had befriended him after his mother took the hike:  
"Mrs. Peters had taught me a lot, taught me to search for what mattered to me, what filled my heart with joy, and to pursue it. I'd learned that cooking was my passion. I had also discovered that I enjoyed spending time with my father, and I wasn't sure I wanted to leave him."  
For this novel, that's high drama. It might be best suited for Julian's peers. Perhaps it's aimed at them.  
Charles Wheeler is a News & Record copy editor and a contributor to the newspaper's book blog, Page Turners.

Banks

Continued from Page H6  
laws allowed banks within the state to grow and prosper, and how changes in federal law encouraged further acquisitions and growth.  
Stories of acquisitions are often stories of personalities. One of the strengths of Rothacker's book are his brief character studies of the key figures in the Charlotte banks' acquisition-fueled expansion. We learn a great deal about the long-time rivals, Ed Crutchfield of First Union and Hugh McColl of Bank of America. We're introduced to their lieutenants, their successors and other important decision-makers as the banks grew, thrived, but ultimately overreached.  
To many in the Triad, the story of Wachovia's rise, near-fall and last-minute acquisition is especially poignant. The original Wachovia, the Winston-Salem bank founded in 1879, was known for its conservative philosophy and solid customer service. For years it was the largest bank in North Carolina, and while it acquired banks and grew

steadily, its growth was eventually outstripped by the more aggressive Charlotte banks. For years, that was fine with Wachovia.  
But as we know, Wachovia merged with First Union in 2001. While the new bank adopted the Wachovia name, it reflected First Union's values and strategies. As many have noted, when Wachovia was bought by Wells Fargo, it was really First Union that went down.  
Rothacker tries to look ahead after the confidence-battering events of the past few years. Like all civic leaders, those in Charlotte hope to diversify and depend less on banking and finance. But the large talent pool and educated workforce hold great promise. The major banks may struggle in the new regulatory environment, but the fundamentals of economic development suggest that Charlotte will eventually be fine.  
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