

HILLSBORO COMMUNITY LIBRARY NEWS

VOLUME 10: NUMBER 8.....AUGUST, 2015

Read Local

Denise Chávez is a Las Cruces writer who participated in the Hillsboro BookFest in May. In addition to many other awards, last month at the American Library Association conference in San Francisco she received first place in the Popular Fiction Category of the International Latino Book Awards for her most recent novel, reviewed here.

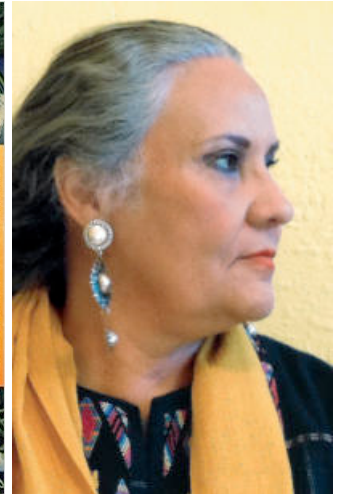
Featured this Month

The King and Queen of Comezón by Denise Chávez

This novel describes life in the fictional town of Comezón, a small town in southern New Mexico, possibly Las Cruces or Mesilla, but it could even describe the inhabitants of a tiny town like Hillsboro. The story examines the lives of a small group of people who live, love, feel, hope, and suffer. Most of the protagonists are older (again like Hillsboro). And like any human, they have an itch (the *comezón* of the title). The itch is psychological, but not always separable from the physical. The mental itch is imagining the possibilities – a more meaningful life, more love, more being loved, more happiness – and lamenting the realities – the pains of injustice, of rejection, of the body as we grow older.

The character portraits are sharpened, as well as blurred, by their self-assessments and by the assessments of their compatriots. Chávez’s observations of these denizens of the town are sensitive, witty, and earthy, even bawdy.

The chief protagonists form a single household. Arnulfo Olivárez is a 72-year-old suffering from a painful bunion, a growing cancer, a loss of sexual appetite, and concerns about the future. He and his devoted, loving wife, Emilia, have maintained separate bedrooms for years. Their 28-year-old daughter, Juliana, deformed at birth and confined to a wheelchair, is very pretty and secretly smart and imaginative. An adopted daughter, Lucinda, the



product of Arnulfo’s affair with a woman who promptly left town, is 18 and desperate to flee the home. Finally, there is Isá, the live-in cook, caregiver for Juliana, surrogate mom for Lucinda, best friend of Emilia, and implacable disdainer of Arnulfo.

Other residents’ stories are interwoven with these principals. There is the young priest from Spain who gives Juliana weekly Catechism lessons, promoting fantasies on both sides. There is Rey Suárez, a former border agent, who now owns the local lounge that the male protagonists visit regularly; Mata, the police chief, and his son Ruley, who lures Lucinda away from home; Joe Kiratz, the acting mayor; Don Clo, the drug mafioso from across the border.

The novel begins at the town’s Cinco de Mayo celebration where Arnulfo serves as King and has installed Lucinda as the fiesta Queen. It ends four months later at a celebration of Mexican independence in mid-September.

Although Spanish words and phrases are common, the meanings are usually clear from context. The author has provided us a 22-page list of these words with her colloquial translations to English; it will be placed inside the front cover of the Library’s copy.

Review and Introduction by Garland Bills

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New at the Library

Nonfiction

Bush League Boys: *The Postwar Legends of Baseball in the American Southwest* by Toby Smith
Puebloan Ruins of the Southwest by Arthur H. Rohn & William M. Ferguson
Santa Fe Hispanic Culture: *Preserving Identity in a Tourist Town* by Andrew Leo Lovato
Santa Fe Nativa: *A Collection of Nuevomexicano Writing* by Rosalie C. Otero et al.
The Story of Corn by Betty Fussell
Through a Narrow Window: *Friedl Dicker-Brandeis and Her Terezin Students* by Linney Wix
Fly Fishing in Northern New Mexico by Craig Martin
Community Health Narratives by Emily Mendenhall & Kathy Wollner
Elephant Butte Dam by Sherry Fletcher and Cindy Carpenter
Hatch Valley by Cindy Carpenter and Sherry Fletcher
Lost and Found by John Glatt

Mystery

The Ballad of Tom Dooley by Sharyn McCrumb
Rock With Wings by Anne Hillerman
Darkness, My Old Friend by Lisa Unger
The Third Rail by Michael Harvey
Monument to Murder by Margaret Truman
I Am Not a Serial Killer by Dan Wells
Don't Go by Lisa Scottoline
The Innocent by David Baldacci
Liars Anonymous by Louise Ure

Library Hours:

Sunday & Monday: closed
Tues. 3:30 - 5:30pm Wed. 1:00 - 4:00pm
Thurs: 3:30 - 5:30pm Fri: 10:00am - 1:00pm
Saturday 10:00am-2:00pm

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Fiction

The Faster Redder Road by Stephen Graham Jones
The Canyon by Stanley Crawford
A Carol Dickens Christmas by Thomas Fox Averill
Go Set a Watchman by Harper Lee
Ordinary Grace by William Kent Krueger

Science Fiction

The Way of Thorn and Thunder by Daniel H. Justice

Films on DVD

Bram Stoker's Dracula ... The Cowboy Way
The Green Mile ... The Party ... Patriot Games
Thelma & Louise ... What's Eating Gilbert Grape
Top Gun ... Identity ... A Walk in the Clouds
Once upon a Time in America ... Seven Pounds
Soylent Green ... An Innocent Man ... Night Shift
Deep Rising ... The Hangover ... Killers
The Secret Life of Walter Mitty

Notes From the Library Board

The **First Hillsboro Antiques Festival** will be Friday through Monday (4 days!) of Labor Day weekend. On Saturday and Sunday of that weekend, there will be a historic homes tour beautifully organized by Jane Dobrott and Becky Porter; tickets are \$10 per person.

Next month's **Bake Sale** will also fall on Labor Day weekend when out-of-town visitors will be flocking to Hillsboro--a good time to bake a little extra something to help the Library fundraising. Thanks for all you do to keep the books flowing!

Bookmobile Schedule

Wednesday, August 19

Hillsboro: 1:00 - 2:00 pm Kingston: 2:30 - 3:30 pm

For a complete listing of Library materials, visit
<http://www.hillsborocommunitylibrary.com>