



Coldwater *Daily Reporter*, Friday August 23, 2013, page A1:

COLDWATER BRANCH OF THE BRANCH DISTRICT LIBRARY

Local author to discuss her novel

By Christy Hart-Harris
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COLDWATER — Author Victoria J. Burlew, a Branch County resident, will be at the Coldwater branch of the Branch District Library Saturday from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. for a book signing and discussion of her novel titled, “What Nightmares Are Made Of.”

Burlew moved from Hillsdale County to Branch County in 1966 and was a Quincy High school graduate. She moved to California in 2009.

With a desire to write since she was a young child, Burlew spent six months writing the suspense-thriller romance novel. She



Burlew

finished the book in 2000 and recently had it published.

“My sister-in-law said I should make my story into a novel so I decided to start writing,” said Burlew.

Citing Steven King and her own vivid imagination as inspirations, Burlew drew from life experience and fiction to create the novel.

The novel follows 20-year-old Samantha Beaux of Black Hawk Mills Mich. during her life in the 1970s. After narrowly escaping being raped in

her hometown by an undercover narcotics police officer, she moves to California looking for a fresh start.

After 20 years, she returns to Black Hawk Mills to discover a string of gruesome murders has been plaguing the small town since her departure. She has an idea of the serial killer’s identity — but must prove it without becoming a target herself.

Burlew’s novel is available online as an e-edition and can be purchased at local bookstores. She also donated several copies to the Quincy and Coldwater branch libraries.

Amazon has the book available for purchase and

many readers have reviewed the book. One review said, “I just finished reading ‘What Nightmares Are Made Of,’ and wanted to encourage all avid fiction/mystery readers to hurry to Amazon and purchase this book. I found myself constantly on the edge, wondering if the peril that was developing would envelop and destroy the victim(s), or if eventually, good would triumph over evil.”

A second review said, “Very good book, could not put it down once I got starting reading it. I really enjoyed the Michigan references as I am from Michigan. It brought the story close to home.”

Coldwater *Daily Reporter*, Thursday August 29, 2013, page A4:

Summer reading program was community effort

To the Editor:

I would like to share a tale.

Like most tales, this one begins with, "Once upon a time in a land not so far away, there was a kingdom called 'Kids' Place,' which existed amongst the clouds of the once fair land of the Branch District Library System."

While the kingdom was a pleasant place to visit, its treasure chest — aka — revenue had been dwindling as the nasty dragon of economic hardship grew stronger and bolder. Those who guarded and kept the kingdom's order began to despair.

How would they keep the dragon from destroying the kingdom's yearly celebration of summer and reading?

After much deliberation, envoys were sent out to search beyond the kingdom's borders for help. The kingdom's gatekeepers

kept vigilant watch as the days went by. Would the envoys find help before the dragon had destroyed all that Kid's Place summer reading meant to the community?

Just as hope was beginning to fade, a rider was observed approaching. Would they battle the dragon?

Yes, they would battle the dragon.

"Who are you?" asked the gatekeeper.

"I represent the members of the Coldwater Garden Club, who will give of time, talent and money to the 2013 Summer Reading Program," was the reply.

Soon other riders entered the gates as well; some were familiar and known heroes of Kids' Place — Coldwater Friends of the Library, McDonald's and the Branch County 4-H fair.

Other riders begin to appear: H.C Starck Manufacturing, Monarch Community Bank, Century Bank & Trust, Southern Michigan Bank, Wal-Mart Distribution Facility, Coldwa-

ter Meijer and Wal-Mart stores, Bill Mitchell of the Kalamazoo Rock Club, Loretta Sherfield, Los Tequillos, Michael Ancil of Coldwater Community Health Center, Branch County Sheriff's Dive Team, Jeb Arnold of Arnold's Auto Parts, Scott Carpenter and Scott Winters of Carpenter Creations, Cindy Tate, Jody Pope, CJ Apel and Home Depot, Carol Kahanian, Theresa and Jessica Broadwater, Mary Ellen Newton, Val Albright and the MSU Extension Service, Steve Covell and Culligan's Water Conditioning, Christy Harris of the Daily Reporter, Keith Baker of the City of Coldwater, Gretchen Ennis, Gail Finn, Rick Alzner and Will Council of the Michigan FBI.

With all these willing warriors, the battle was over before it began! No nasty dragon of economic woe kept the children and youth of Branch County from enjoying and participating in the annual Summer Reading Program. In fact, the inhabitants of the fair land came in ever-

growing numbers as the word spread of how much fun could be had in the kingdom of Kids' Place.

Thus ends my tale. This summer proved that we have something rare and heart-warming here in Branch County: We have corporations and individuals willing to give financially and more importantly of their gifts and time to help provide a fun-filled summer for the children of the community.

I believe firmly that as you give, so you receive. For all the enthusiasm and open-handed support, I experienced personally this summer I know this community will be blessed in years to come and in ways beyond our imagination.

And it will all be due to Branch County people who gave to others in spite of these hard times.

Thus, on behalf of all the children who participated in and experienced the great generosity of this community, I say thanks. We truly could not have held the Summer Reading Program this summer without you.

— Linda Dull, Youth Services Coordinator, Kids' Place, Branch District Library System

Coldwater *Daily Reporter*, Tuesday September 11, 2013, page A1:

MOTHER-SON WRITING TEAM

Authors share life's journey through history

By **Christy Hart-Harris**
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COLDWATER — Traumatic experiences make way for the exploration of truth and real love. Facing betrayal within a family can directly lead to learning the process of trusting all over again.

Local author, Dr. Annette Perkins discovered these truths after a personal traumatic event which

led her to express her discovery using the world of words.

"I've always wanted to write a book. I love to write and research," said Perkins.

Her book, "Dearest Catherine: The Betrayal," explores a woman's heart and feelings of anger, loneliness, indignation and despair. Anne finds herself being forced into an unhappy marriage and swept off to England from New

York in 1839. She becomes an instant mother to her husband's daughters and all the nuances that go along with her life lead her to question everything.

Anne begins to question her faith and why God would allow these trials in her life. She finds herself thrown into more traumatic experiences in the second addition to the trilogy,



Local author **Annette Perkins**



Local Author **Jonathan Perkins**

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"Dearest Catherine: The Journey."

In the second novel, Anne continues to question her faith, but with the help of true friendship, she is on the path to recovery and forgiveness. She spends her time learning to trust and conquer life's many tragedies without anger and fear ruling her thoughts.

The final novel, titled "Dearest Catherine: The Blessing," will follow Anne through her trials and learning experiences. The novel is scheduled to be released in 2014.

Perkin's spent roughly a year writing both novels. She researched the Victorian era to bring accuracy to the stories.

"I researched as I was writing. I wanted to add things into the story that coincided with the time period. If I came into a topic I wanted more depth to, I researched it," said Perkins.

Perkins and her son, Jonathan, self-published their novels through Xulon Press.

Jonathan's book, titled "Upon the Eastern Sun," is a fictional, historical story of the Civil War battle at Gettysburg. He spent two years researching the war and time period. The historically-accurate novel follows Union General John Buford and Confederate Brigadier General James Pettigrew, as well as other, fictional

characters, through the Civil War.

Jonathan is currently working on a second novel that will follow the factual life of The Culp Family during the Civil War at Gettysburg. The Culp family suffered greatly through the war, with one son fighting on the Confederate side and the other for the Union.

Annette and Jonathan originally come from New York, but moved to Michigan 17 years ago and currently reside near Somerset.

Annette has been married to her husband, Ron,

for 32 years and they have two sons. She received her doctorate degree in educational leadership from Central Michigan University. She taught special education for 15 years in New York and Michigan.

Jonathan is also married with two children. He is a graduate of American Public University with degrees in criminal justice and history with a focus on the Civil War era. He is a member of the Michigan Archaeological Society and recently became a certified scuba diver, researching shipwrecks.

The duo will be at the Coldwater Branch of the Branch District Library from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 14. Copies of the books will be available for purchase and a signing will take place after the "eat and greet." The event is free to the public.

The library is located at 10 E. Chicago St., Coldwater. For more information, contact the library at (517) 278-2341.

The novels are also available for purchase through Amazon, Barnes and Noble and the publishing company, Xulon Press.

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Coldwater *Daily Reporter*, Thursday, September 12, 2013, page A5:

COLWATER BRANCH LIBRARY

Shilling teaches the art of watercolor

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Coldwater- The Coldwater Branch of the Branch District Library will be hosting a watercolor for beginners class. Artist Vivian Schilling will be instructing the two part class on September 16 and 23 from 1:30 to 4 p.m.

Shilling self taught herself to paint and has been mastering the art for almost 60 plus years. She has expanded her artistic education by attending and partaking in nationally known Artists' workshops—Tony Couch, Stephen Quiller and Joe Fettingis— since 1986.

Shilling's range of artistic ability is broad and includes watercolor/collage, pastel, oil painting, charcoal, jewelry, lampwork beads and china painting.

"Before I started painting predominantly water media, I was a pastel artist, almost exclusively, I really admire the work of the impressionists, Edgar Degas, Berthe Morisot, Mary Casatt, etc," said Shilling.

Shilling was awarded the Peggy Award in 1975 and 1976, Best of show for

the Tibbits Arts & Crafts show in 1986, The Purchase Award from Lost Nation's Art Show in 2007, Honorable Mention in the Michigan Artists Competition in 2010, 2011 and 2012 and other awards over the years.

She is currently teaching china and watercolor painting classes. Over the years, she has taught several small workshops through the Art Center of Battle Creek and watercolor/collage workshop through the Hillsdale Artists Guild.

"When I paint, my real love is watching the water move the color in such unexpected ways and then making it work for what ever I'm trying to accomplish."

Shilling is also a membership of the South West Michigan Watercolor Society, the Battle Creek Society of Artists, Hillsdale Art Guild, Michigan Watercolor Society, American Watercolor Society, Branch County Art Guild, the Open Door Gallery in Sturgis, an Artists Co-operative, Arts & Industry in Calhoun County, and Arts Alive in Coldwater.

She has exhibited her art at the Gallery in Battle Creek, the Art Center of Battle Creek and the Kalamazoo Institute of Art. and has been accepted at the Ella Sharp Art show in Jackson, The Lost Nation's Art Show, Hillsdale Arts Council, Carnegie Center for the Arts in Three Rivers, Art Center of Battle Creek, The Krasl Art Center in St. Joseph, The Tibbits Arts & Craft Show.

"The most important thing that I'm hoping to impart to the students, is that watercolor is fun, and not so scary, a lot of people think that watercolor is scary and that once you put it on the paper it can never be corrected, well, that is a misnomer, if you use the correct paint and use quality paper, it can be corrected," said Shilling.

"We are not going to concentrate on just one subject, we will be showing them how to make a wash work and if there is time a tree and rocks, maybe water, and sky, we'll see how that goes," she added.

For more information or to reserve a spot, contact the Coldwater library at 278-2341.