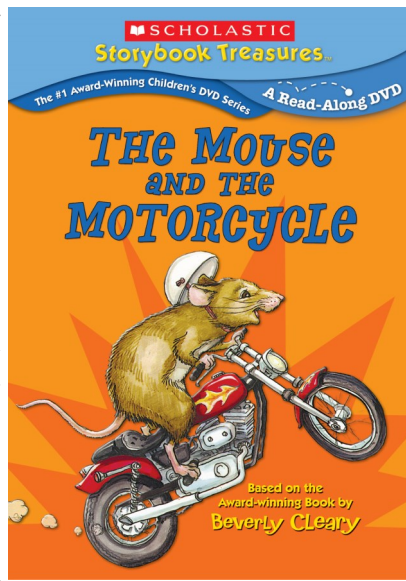


A Special Birthday is Coming Up!

Children's author Beverly Cleary will have to take a deep breath to blow out all her birthday candles on April 12th as she turns 100 years old. Cleary is best known for authoring *The Mouse and the Motorcycle* and the *Ramona* series.



In fact, 91 million copies of her book have sold worldwide. In honor of her birthday and her impact to children's literature, April 12th is celebrated as National Drop Everything and Read Day.

Born on April 12, 1916 in Oregon, Cleary initially struggled with learning to read until her school librarian encouraged her to find relatable books and inspired her that maybe she could one day write books too. The idea stuck; Cleary became an avid reader and she graduated in 1934 with a BA in English from the University of California. Like her mentor, she became a children's librarian.

In 1950, Beverly Cleary published her first book *Henry Huggins* about a boy, his dog, and his friends. The characters in her first book were based on children she grew up with and Cleary told the story in a simple, humorous way that appealed to children. The author recalls that in the 1920s, books were often published in England and featured children with ponies and nannies. She wanted to write something tougher, something more relevant to children.

Cleary wrote several more stories about Henry Huggins, a few of which introduce the ever-remembered Ramona and Beezus characters, which Cleary developed into their own series of books.

Beverly Cleary has won several prestigious awards for the 40 plus books she has written such as the John Newberry Medal, the National Medal of Arts, and the Laura Ingalls Wilder Award as well as over 35 statewide awards based on the direct votes of her young readers.

In 2000, Cleary was named a "Living Legend" by the Library of Congress, a distinction given to "artists, writers, activists, filmmakers, physicians, entertainers, sports figures and public servants who have made significant contributions to America's diverse cultural, scientific, and social heritage." Her books are popular in over twenty countries and read in over fourteen languages.

But it's not the awards that Cleary is most proud of. In a recent interview with "The Today Show," Cleary puts it simply: she is proudest "of the fact that children love my books."

Celebrate her birthday on April 12th by dropping everything and picking up a book. Come to the Huntsville Public Library to check out our collection of Beverly Cleary's books.

- Rachel McPhail,
Children's Librarian

Check out the exciting Children's Programs at the Huntsville Public Library!



- Mother Goose Lapsits, 10:30 Mondays
- Storytime, 10:45 on Wednesdays AND Fridays
- Family Movie Night, 5:30, 2nd Friday of the Month
- Wii Friday, 4-6 except on Family Movie Night
- Lego Club, 1st and 3rd Thursdays of the month
- Read with the Dogs, 3rd Monday of the month

Complete listings of events at www.myhuntsvillelibrary.com

For more information, contact Children's Coordinator Rachel McPhail, at 936-291-5910.

Dreams coming true
on page 3



VOLUME 7, ISSUE 4

HUNTSVILLE
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BETWEEN THE PAGES

APRIL 2016

Celebrating the "Queen of the Dragons"

Story by Peirs Anderson

There aren't many things that are more iconic of fantasy than dragons, and few authors who have been known so well for their dragons as Anne McCaffrey.

Born April 1st, 1926 in Cambridge Massachusetts, this Irish author was the first woman to win a Hugo Award for fiction and the first to win a Nebula Award, and has been nicknamed the "Queen of the Dragons."

McCaffrey wrote one of the first science-fiction books to appear on the New York Times Best Seller list, and has provided wonder and magic to millions.

McCaffrey considered most of her work science fiction and would enjoy "cutting them short when they call me a 'fantasy' writer," and wrote in a period when the majority of science fiction readership was mostly male. Her stories helped to bring science



April 1, 1926-Nov. 21, 2011

fiction to everyone, broadening horizons with her belief that "Dragons have universal appeal."

McCaffrey was motivated to further improve the position of female characters in science fiction after becoming tired of seeing women portrayed as weak. In 1967, this drove her to write *Restoree*, providing as she said an "intelligent, survivor-type woman as the protagonist of an s-f story."

Though she wrote many books outside of the *Dragonriders of Pern* series, the stories of the intrepid survivors of Pern remain her most well-known works.

On a planet ravaged at varying times by an alien life form called *Thread*, a group of colonists from Earth are forced to abandon their advanced technologies; relying instead on native reptiles they altered to fight the invading threat: Dragons.

Centuries later, the inhabitants had forgotten their origins, and all but forgotten the threat of the *Thread*.

The dragons were all but extinct

when an irregular pass of the planet brings the life devouring alien into lives of the dwellers of Pern, forcing them to rekindle the flames of the past in the fight for survival. These books show the resilience and ingenuity of humanity faced with a foe that they are unable to confront directly and the search almost all of humanity goes through to find our place in society, in the world and in our own beliefs.

The worlds McCaffrey creates and the characters that fill them create a reality that is both incredible and relatable.

McCaffrey's works have been well received by the science fiction audience, from the first novella in the Pern series *Weyr Search* winning the inaugural Hugo Award for Best Novella to *The White Dragon*, the first science-fiction book by a woman on the New York Times best-seller list. The American Library Association recognized McCaffrey for her contributions to adult and young adult literature with her "focus on the personal and emotional need of human beings."

Her stories all but leap off the page, and consulted with active scientists of the time to add an even deeper element of science and reality to her works.

Another renowned science fiction author, Arthur C. Clarke, said; "Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic."

Thank you Anne McCaffrey from the bottom of my heart for many years of magic and the inspiration in science to believe that anything is possible. Happy Birthday, "Queen of the Dragons."

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Closed Sunday

Explore your family history for free

When memory fails —



Genealogy



By Richard Lane,
Public Services

There's a popular myth that fish have a memory of only a few seconds. Fish scientists, more properly known as ichthyologists, challenge the myth. It appears that some species of fish may have a memory lasting up to five months. How ichthyologists measure fish memory remains a mystery.

It can be said, however, that fish remember where they have successfully foraged for food in safe, sheltered locations.

The strategy works because successful fish know the loca-

tion of abundant resources. Those with this ability pass on the memory gene to the next generation while those without the ability fall prey to predators or starvation. Our hapless fish, and the species to which he belongs, is less likely to survive. Darwin would be proud.

What does this fish story have to do with family history? There's an analogy here.

Successful family historians and our retentive aquatic friends know where their resources are located. Fish memories are products of reinforced neural networks focused on the single aspect of survival.

Family historians, on the other hand, are all too often

juggling competing stories, dates, facts and places.

Family historian's memories easily become overloaded with distractions, contradictions and confusion.

Memories fail and family histories are lost in reams of notes and loose papers stored in closets and under beds. It's a far too common occurrence. There's a solution to memory lapses and outright memory failures.

Organize!

The successful family historian sets to writing the details of their discoveries. Most family historians begin their quest by recording pertinent information on standard and readily available forms.

Later, as the family history

becomes more complex, many family historians use computer based programs. Successful family historians know the location of their resources.

Well developed and documented histories help us understand who we are and how we came to be. Moreover, they provide a mechanism to pass family histories forward to future generations. It's important to safeguard family histories.

Papers can be misplaced and computer records may be lost in cyberspace.

Family historians are encouraged to make copies of their work and donate them to their local genealogical society or public library for safe-keeping.

A thriller for deep readers

Velvet Undercover by Teri Brown

Samantha Donaldson's family has always done its duty for the British Crown. In the midst of World War I, seventeen-year-old Sam follows in their footsteps, serving her country from the home front as a Girl Guide and messenger for the intelligence organization MI5. After her father disappears on a diplomatic mission, she continues their studies of languages, high-level mathematics, and complex puzzles and codes, hoping to make him proud.

When Sam is asked to join the famed women's spy group La Dame Blanche she's torn—this could be the adventure she's dreamed of, but how can she abandon her mother, who has already lost a husband to the war? But when her handlers reveal shocking news, Sam realizes there's no way she can refuse the exciting and dangerous opportunity.

Her acceptance leads her straight into the heart of enemy territory on a mission to extract the most valuable British spy embedded in Germany, known to the members of LDB only as Velvet. Deep undercover within the court of Kaiser Wilhelm II, Samantha must navigate the labyrinthine palace and its many glamorous—and secretive—residents to complete her assignment.

To make matters worse she finds herself forming a forbidden attraction to the enemy—a dangerously handsome German guard. In a

place where personal politics are treacherously entangled in wartime policy, can Samantha discover the truth and find Velvet before it's too late...for them both?

From author Teri Brown comes this thrilling story of one girl's journey into a deadly world of spy craft and betrayal—with unforgettable consequences.

"*Velvet Undercover* is a masterfully crafted thriller that plunges readers deep into a seductive, high-stakes world of espionage and murder. This book is perfect for anyone in the mood for an addictive, wicked-smart read." —Cat Winters, Morris Award Finalist for *In the Shadow of Blackbirds*

"Clever, impetuous Samantha Donaldson is a delight to follow through the murky world of the German court in this twisty tale of espionage and forbidden romance." —Katherine Longshore, author of the Gilt series and *Manor of Secrets*

- Ashley Newsome, Teen Coordinator

teen



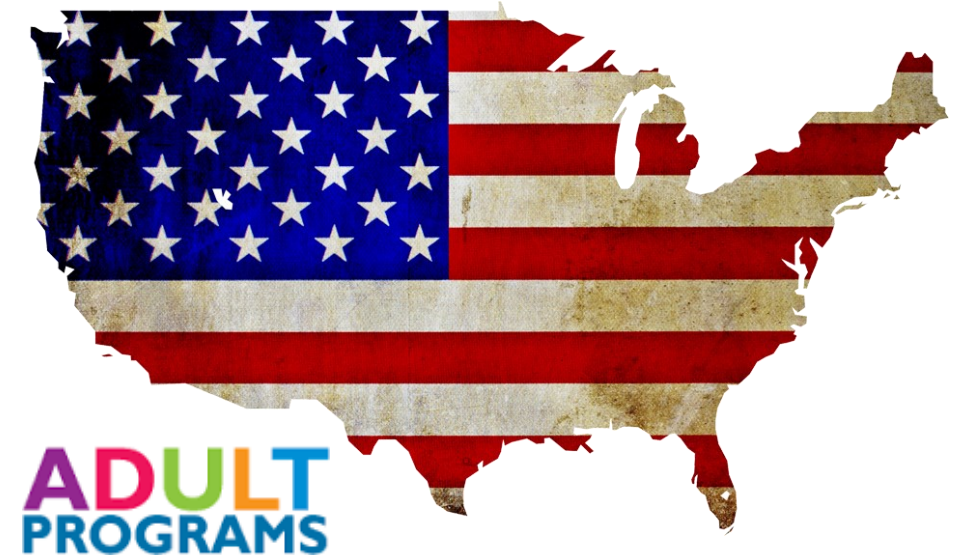
Citizenship once step closer @HPL

How many voting members are in the U.S House of Representatives? Who wrote the Declaration of Independence? Why does the flag have 13 stripes? (See answers at end of article.)

These are just some of the questions being answered by immigrants preparing for the naturalization exam at the U.S. Citizenship Preparation Course. The Huntsville Public Library and Sam Houston State University have joined forces to help these community members succeed.

Each Monday evening in April, a group of 29 adults interested in becoming American citizens meets in the library's Community Room.

They are learning about American government, American history and geography, national symbols and national holidays. These adults, coming from 11 different countries, have lived in the United States anywhere from 2 to 55 years but all possess the



desire to make a commitment to this country. The mix of cultures makes the class ten times more interesting. The first week was a lot of fun! We learned people's names, and even touched on some early American History.

That's not all, the class was lucky enough to listen to an inspirational speech given by City Council Member Joe Rodriguez about his immigrant family's path to citizenship.

The one thing that excited everyone the most was the "Thanksgiving" dinner that is planned for the last class day. Everyone was talking about ideas for their native country dish!

For more information and to sign up for current and future activities, contact Mary Kokot, Adult Services Coordinator, at [\(936\) 291-5471](tel:936-291-5471).

435, Thomas Jefferson, there were 13 original colonies

Artificial Intelligence Helping People

A developer at Microsoft has created an app that can be launched through a pair of smart sunglasses or a smartphone to assist the blind in connecting with the world. The developer of this app has a very good reason to have developed this app because he, Saqib Shaikh, is blind. The app in the sunglasses is able to detect objects, humans, and even human emotions. The app then translates these interactions into audio that plays from a speaker built in to the sunglasses so the

person can hear what the app is seeing. The app for the smartphone is also very helpful in assisting the blind. Take a picture of a menu, book page, or newspaper and the app can read aloud the text that is in the image. To me, an app that can detect human emotion sounds so complex and interesting. The app is not commercially available yet as it was announced March 30, 2016 at the Microsoft \build Conference. Knowing that a computer can tell how I'm feeling from a

smile or frown gives hope that Artificial Intelligence in reality is not far away. Let us know what you think about Artificial Intelligence on Twitter and Facebook.



- Drew Nevlud,
Library IT Specialist