



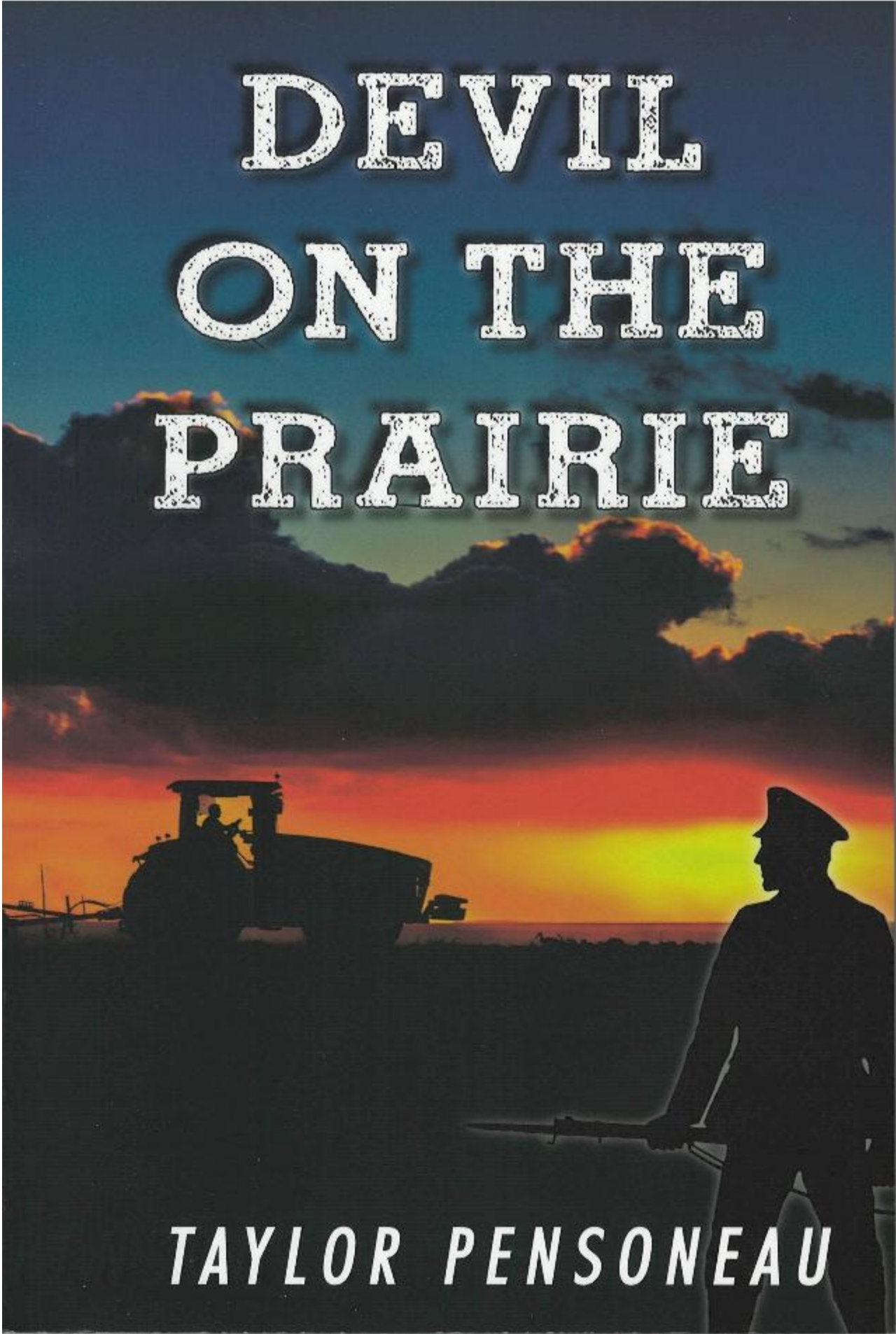
Celebrate Indies & Local Authors

by George Rishel

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April is the month when independent bookstores nationwide celebrate Independent Bookstore Day. This year it is Saturday, April 30.

DEVIL ON THE PRAIRIE



TAYLOR PENSONEAU

Among the stores celebrating this day are Afterwords in Edwardsville and The Sly Fox in Virden. So, this month is a good one to celebrate some of our local authors.

Belleville native Taylor Pensoneau (now living in New Berlin) is best known to many for *Brothers Notorious*, *The Sheltons*, *Southern Illinois' Legendary Gangsters*, published in 2002, and *Dapper & Deadly*, *The True Story of Black Charlie Harris*, published in 2010. But, shortly after *Brothers Notorious*, Pensoneau wrote his first fictional novel, *The Summer of '50*, featuring Jake Brosky, a crack investigative reporter for a St. Louis newspaper.

For many years Pensoneau himself was the statehouse reporter for the St. Louis Post-Dispatch. A second Jack Brosky novel, *Falling Star*, followed in 2019. A year later came the third Jake Brosky crime novel, *Devil on the Prairie*, this time searching for a fugitive Nazi criminal. Liz Pensoneau, writing as Granny Lizzy, created a children's picture book called *How Stray Cats Taught Taylor and Lizzy About God's Love*.

How Stray Cats Taught Taylor And Lizzy About God's Love



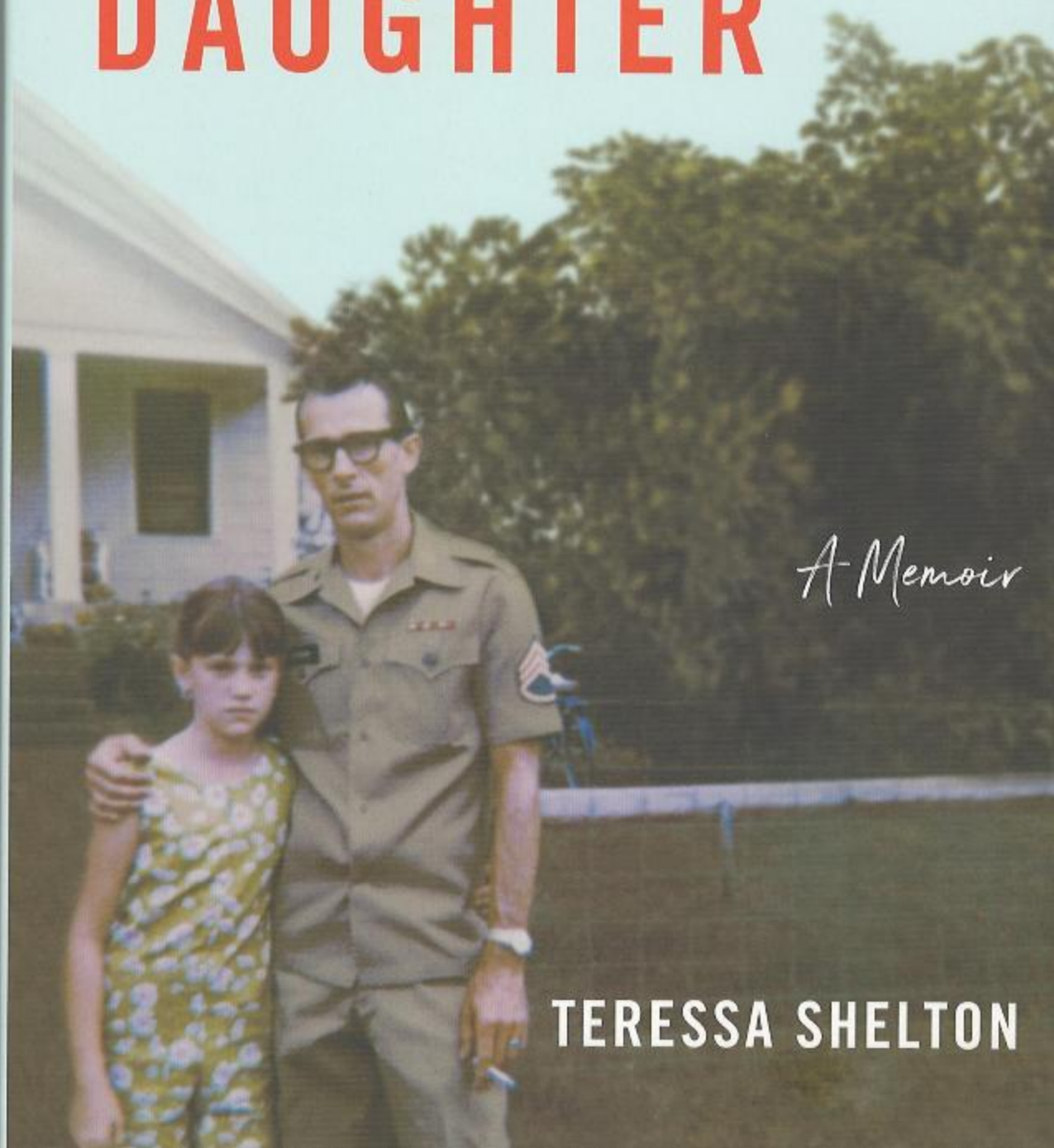
BY GRANNY LIZZY

Molly Macrae of Champaign began writing cozy mysteries centered around a haunted yarn shop. Later, she launched a new series about a Scottish Highland bookstore, Yon Bonnie Books, and its adjoining café Cakes and Tales, run by four women who moved to the western coast of Scotland from Illinois. The first in the series is *Plaid and Plagiarism*, published in 2017. The fifth book in the series, *Argyles and Arsenic*, was just released in March. A 93-year-old woman living in a Scottish baronial manor decides to rid herself of all she doesn't need by throwing a party and inviting friends to come and take what they want. Then, the director of the local museum is found dead—poisoned.

THE SERGEANT'S DAUGHTER

A Memoir

TERESSA SHELTON



Retired Illinois State Police Captain C. Ed Traylor of Waggoner wrote his first book, *The Crossing* about a terrorist plot to attack America on the anniversary of September 11. But his latest crime novel, *Choices, A Story About Adultery, Greed, Police Corruption, and Murder*, is located in Macoupin and Montgomery counties.

The owner of Second Reading Book Shop in Alton, John Dunphy, has penned three books about Southwest and Southern Illinois: *From Christmas to Twelfth Night in Southern Illinois*; *Abolitionism and the Civil War in Southwestern Illinois*, and *Murder & Mayhem in Southwestern Illinois*. All are nonfiction works examining the unique history and little-known facts about this part of the Prairie State.

Palmyra resident Larry Mahan and his wife Donna wrote an award-winning travel book, *20 Day Trips in and around the Shawnee National Forest*, published in 2013 by Southern Illinois University Press. The next year he followed with *Looking Back, Memories of Palmyra, Illinois*.

If I Lived in a Zoo



Written by: Chelsea McGlothlin
Illustrated by: Nadia Ilchuk

Springfield resident Teresa Shelton in *The Sergeant's Daughter* tells a harrowing, and true tale of a young girl who leaves her harsh childhood behind to build a life of her own.

Local authors can also boast several books for children. A few years ago Carla Mayernick of Girard, wrote *Where's Abe?* a children's picture book taking you on a journey around Springfield, Illinois, looking for Abraham Lincoln. Claudine C. Wargel, who grew up near Virden, drew on her own childhood to create *Hattie Mae's Halloween*, a chapter book about a farm girl trying to create an original Halloween costume. Sisters Elizabeth Gregurich and Stacey Hendricks, who also grew up in Virden, adapted a real-life experience in *Ella & Sebastian*, a story about a 9-year-old girl with leukemia who meets an intriguing boy at an amusement park and learns dreaming is as much a part of life as the reality of her illness.

Former teacher Cinda Ackerman Klickna of Springfield takes aim at verbs in *Out of the Beaks of Birds: Our Crazy, Pesky... Verbs*, a picture book. Examples are the use of “bring”, “brought”, and “have brought” or “take”, “took”, and “have taken.” Information about five commonly seen birds concludes the book.

To the
UTTERMOST
ENDS *of*
the **EARTH**

The **EPIC HUNT** *for*
the **SOUTH'S MOST FEARED SHIP—**
and the **GREATEST SEA BATTLE**
of the **CIVIL WAR**

AWARD-WINNING AUTHORS OF *ALL BLOOD RUNS RED*

PHIL KEITH *with* **TOM CLAVIN**



NEW YORK TIMES *bestselling author of* THE SHOEMAKER'S WIFE

ADRIANA TRIGIANI

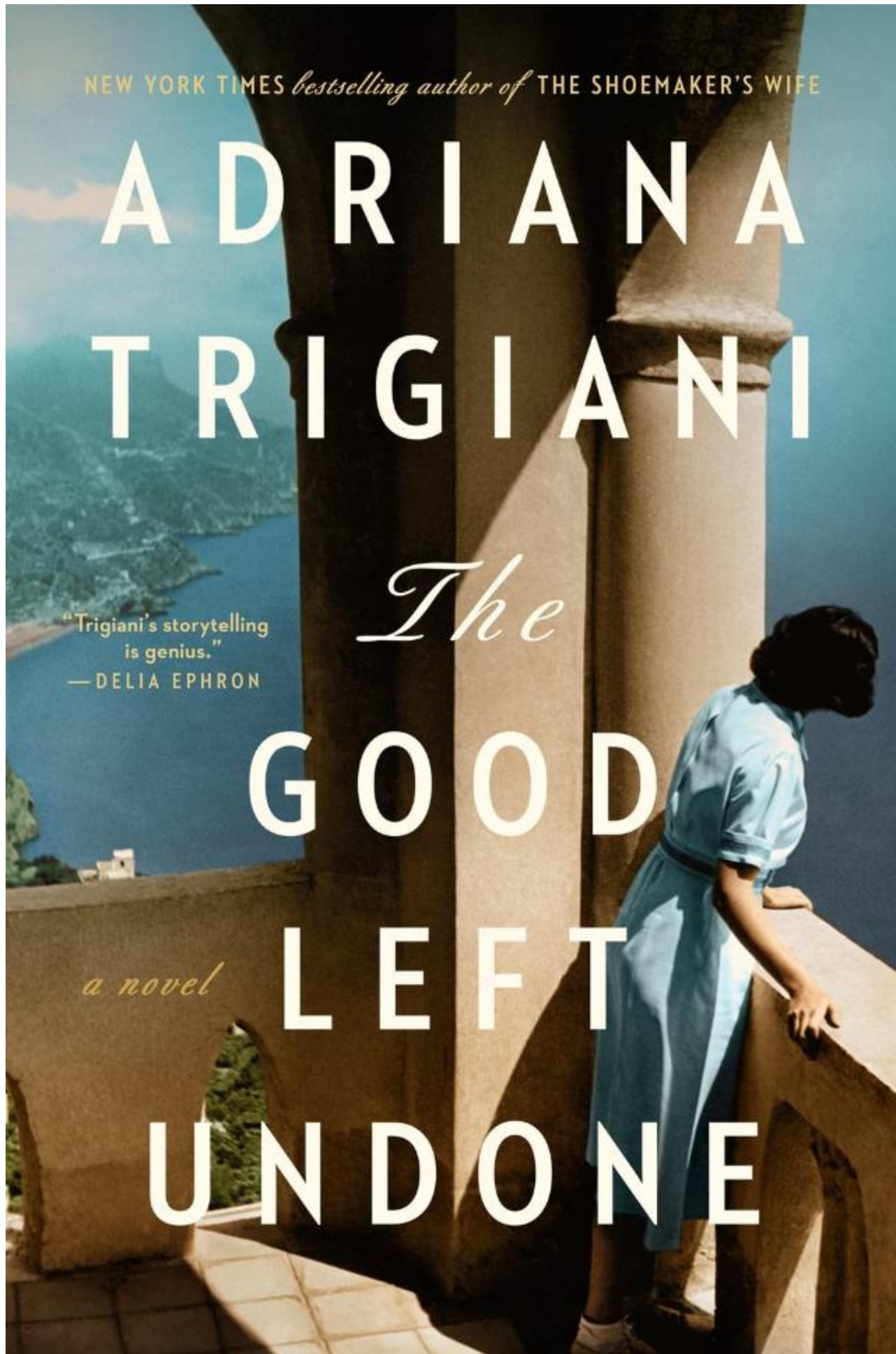
"Trigiani's storytelling
is genius."
—DELIA EPHRON

The

GOOD

a novel LEFT

UNDONE





CHOICES

A Story About Adultery, Greed,
Police Corruption, and Murder

A novel by
C. Ed Traylor

Rochester teacher Chelsea McGlothlin used her imagination to create two books: *If I Lived in a Snow Globe* and *If I Lived in a Zoo*. Each book challenges a child to imagine living in these places. Her illustrator, Nadia Ilchuk, lives in Ukraine.

Carlinville resident Lee LoBue, a young father of two girls, penned *Sleepy Dinosaur* and the *Bad Case of the Bedtime Roars*. This picture book uses text that calls for being read aloud with a cadence and a rhyme to hold a little one's interest, especially at bedtime. The illustrations by Chicago-based Mathew Schelsky are bold and colorful.

These books are only a small sample of what local area authors have created. Several of these authors have had their books printed and bound at R & R Bindery in Girard, Illinois. Future Book Buzz columns will include other local authors' books. Of course, major publishers offer a slew of new books in April. Here are just a few of them.



Highly regarded author Adriana Trigiani brings us a World War II historical novel, *The Good Left Undone*, about a multi-generational Italian family. Anne Hillerman continues her father's Navaho Tribal Police saga of Joe Leaphorn, Jim Chee, and now Chee's wife Bernie Manuelito in *The Sacred Bridge*. Civil War history buffs may gravitate to Phil Keith's *To the Uttermost Ends of the Earth: The Epic Hunt for the South's Most Feared Ship—and the Greatest Sea Battle of the Civil War*. And duck hunters may flock to *Wings Over Water: The Vital Magic of North America's Prairie Wetlands*, a photo book and joint venture of the Max McGraw Wildlife Foundation, Ducks Unlimited, the Wetlands America Trust, Ducks Unlimited Canada, and the National Audubon society—with a forward by actor Michael Keaton.

If you are a local author, don't fear, we will highlight you and your works in future columns. To ensure that coverage, don't hesitate to email me to make sure your works are covered.

George Rishel is the owner of The Sly Fox Bookstore, which has been in business for 23 years. The Sly Fox is located on the West Side Square in Virden. George can be reached at slyfox@royell.net or 217-965-3641. Find The Sly Fox on Facebook or at www.slyfoxbookstore.com.

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