Board Members
President-Mike Jacobs
Vice President-David Fosmire
Secretary-Sue Cox
Treasurer-Pat French
Activities-Leslie Flohr
Building and Remodel-Robert Allen
Clubhouse-Harley O'Neil
Grounds-Kathi Peterson
Reserves-Richard Leary

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JUNE 2010 BULLETIN

Saluting Innis Arden's 2010 Graduates!

• Miriam Aflakian (granddaughter of Betty Burns) is graduating with a law degree from Gonzaga University May 15th and will take her bar exam in July of this year. Her BS degree was earned from the University of Washington where she was on the Honor Roll.
• Bryant Braswell (grandson of Betty Burns) graduated from high school and has been accepted at Washington State University where he plans to attend this fall. He will be the second person of the third generation of his grandparents to be WSU students and graduates.
• Karl Clocksin graduated from King's High School and will attend Seattle University in the fall. He plans to study Engineering.
• Mackenzie Dallas is graduating from Shorewood High School and will be attending Claremont McKenna College in the fall.
• Christina Diorio has graduated from Shorewood High School and will attend Rice University in Houston in the fall.
• Annie Doubleday is graduating from Lakeside, where she was a National Merit Scholar, four-year member of the cross country and swim teams and swim team captain. She has been a member of The Seattle Children's Chorus for 11 years, including 3 tours abroad. Annie will be attending Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota in the fall.
• Erica Ellersick graduated with honors from Pacific Lutheran University with a degree of education. She will be teaching at Kellogg Middle School of Shoreline in the fall. This summer, she is teaching in a local church.
• Lizzie Esselman graduated May 23rd from Whitman College with a degree in Art History/ Visual Cultural Studies and Biology minor.
• Elaine Fosmire graduated from Oregon State University on June 12, 2010 with a Bachelor of Science degree. Next year she will be pursuing a Doctorate degree in Pharmacy in Virginia, Colorado or Florida.
• Morgan Hamm is graduating from King's High School this (Continued on page 3)
Innis Arden Author to Release New Book

Ivan Doig, prolific author of at least 13 previous books, including 7 novels and 3 non-fiction, is set to release Work Song on June 29th. Work Song is a return to the story of Morris Morgan, one of the central characters of his best-selling 2006 novel, The Whistling Season. According to the synopsis on his website:

Lured like so many others by "the richest hill on earth," Morrie steps off the train in Butte, copper-mining capital of the world, in its jittery heyday of 1919. But while riches elude Morrie, once again a colorful cast of local characters — and their dramas — seem to seek him out: a look-alike-sound-alike pair of retired Welsh miners; a streak-of lightning waif so skinny he is nicknamed Russian Famine; a pair of mining company goons; a comely landlady propitiously named Grace; and an eccentric boss at the public library, the mere whisper of whose nickname inspires an unbookish terror in all who hear it. When Morrie crosses paths with a lively former student, now engaged to a young union leader, he is caught up in the mounting clash between the ironfisted mining company, radical "outside agitators," and the beleaguered miners. And as tensions above and below reach the explosion point, Morrie finds a unique way to give voice to those who truly need one.

Local bookstore appearances include:

- Third Place books (17171 Bothell Way NE), June 29 and July 26, 7:00 PM
- Barnes & Noble (2675 NE University Village Street), July 7, 7:00 PM
- University Book Store (4326 University Way N.E.), July 14, 7:00 PM
- Edmonds Bookshop (111 5th Avenue South), July 17, 11:00 AM
Bridge Anyone?

Jane Lowell and Nirmala Dash are looking for fellow Innis Arden bridge players to play party bridge (for fun) on a regular basis in a bridge marathon. The Activities Committee has agreed to list it as an activity. How many interested players will determine schedule of play. Those out of practice who want to brush up their skills to seasoned players are welcome. Singles or pairs.

The plan is to play about 1/month, pairs play the other pairs, and at the end we have a pot luck party with prizes. We hope to begin playing by September.

If you are interested please call/email Jane at 206.546.0128 email: jn.lowell@verizon.net or Nirmala at 206.542.9246 at dash.nirmala@gmail.com before August 31st.

What is a bridge marathon? Participant list and play schedule is sent to all players. Turns are taken hosting. On a mutually agreed upon date/time, 16 hands are played and scored. Host provides coffee/tea & dessert, collects nominal fee (yet to be determined, $2 - $5/pair, to be used toward closing party and prizes) and sends it along with signed (by both pairs) score sheet at end of play. All score sheets are kept and tallied. At the end of the marathon, we have a party (date/place to be set at beginning of play) and prizes are awarded.

Bridge Info for setting up Marathon

Name: ____________________________

Single or Pair? ___________ If Pair, name of Partner: ____________________________

Bridge ability, please pick one (remember this is party bridge):

Rusty/out of practice - know point count, how many needed to open ____________________________

Play occasionally - need rules refresher ____________________________

Play regularly - know most rules, conventions & scoring ____________________________

Strong player - can explain what you played wrong, why you went set ____________________________

Duplicate player - serious but always a student ____________________________

Email address: ____________________________

Phone number: ____________________________

Best evenings to play Tue, Wed, or? ____________________________

Anticipated play time will be 7:00 - 9:00PM ____________________________

Please return this info to Jane Lowell at jn.lowell@verizon.net, phone 206.546.0128 or Nirmala Dash at 206.542.9246 at dash.nirmala@gmail.com before Aug 31st. Thank you!
COMMING EVENTS
Board Meeting
July 13th 7:00 PM
At the Clubhouse

Save the date!
Salmon BBQ
September 12th

Deadline for July Bulletin—
July 18th
Community Notices
(no anonymous items)
Carol Solie, 542-4978
csolie66@gmail.com
17061 12th Avenue N.W.
Remodels—Robert Allen 542-3219

We’re on the Web!
www.innisarden.com

(Continued from page 6)

A motion passed unanimously approving the Blue Heron cutting plan as posted on the web site.

A motion carried (7-1) approving the replanting plan for Blue Heron Reserve.

Regarding the Reserve K (Clubhouse) cutting request, the VMP has been on the website, as was the cutting plan involving 40+ trees on Clubhouse grounds, which have all been marked with pink surveyor’s ribbon. A motion was unanimously passed approving the VMP for Reserve K.

A motion carried (7-1) approving the cutting and replanting plan for Reserve K. It was noted that the expenses will be covered by the 2011 budget.

Meeting adjourned at 8:57 P.M.

Sue Cox, Secretary

Missing Keys

Within the past week, I may have dropped a key to my BMW somewhere in Innis Arden. The key has a small BMW insignia on it, so it is readily identifiable. With it is a silver key about the same size. Please call 546-6320

Reminder

If you plan on changing or adding any structure on your property (deck, garden shed, patio, remodel/addition) contact the Building and Remodels chair Robert Allen at 542-3219. This is your responsibility and obligation as a member of a covenanted community!
In the Coils of Big Copper
Ivan Doig’s novel imagines Butte, Mont., under the baleful sway of the Anaconda mining company after World War I.

BY JOANNA HERSHON

"H ere, as sudden and surprising as a lost city of legendary times, was a metropolis of nowhere: nearly a hundred thousand people atop the earth’s mineral crown, with nothing else around but the Rocky Mountains and the witnessing sky." So observes Morrie Morgan, the hero of Ivan Doig’s new novel, “Work Song” (and of an earlier one, “The Whistling Season”), upon his arrival in Butte, Mont., in the postwar heyday of 1919. The Western landscape is a strong component in the book, yet this is one of the few passages that allude to Montana’s Big Sky. Instead, Doig concentrates on interior spaces: the majestic town library, the modest dining room of the fetching widow Grace Faraday’s boarding house, and the most deeply interior settings of all — the copper mines, where men labor under perilous conditions. Butte suffers from a violent history, and the mining industry plagued daily life. Grace’s husband died in a mining fire, and her boarding house frequently shakes from underground dynamite. Poverty threatens to overtake the whole city: one kid is so skinny his nickname is “Russian Famine.”

Morrie initially plans to offer his bookkeeping services to the behemoth Anaconda mining company. But when it becomes clear that many of Butte’s citizens consider “wearing the copper collar” to be nothing short of devil’s work, he pursues other employment instead and lands a dream job in the town’s public library. There he meets a character named Mr. Sandison (“Call me Sandy”), who is so white-bearded and booming-voiced that — although Morrie wonders time and again whether he might be evil — it is difficult not to think of God himself, or at least Charlton Heston in “The Ten Commandments.” Sandison commands authority from the helm of the library, a veritable freedom ship, with “so many men settled at tables and in corners with newsprint spread wide that the Reading Room took on the look of a schooner under sail.” One regular patron turns out to be Morrie’s old student from “The Whistling Season,” the feisty and fashionable Rabrab, who is now engaged to the mining union’s charismatic leader. And so Morrie’s fate becomes entwined with that of the beleaguered workers.

Doig is a Montana native and an accomplished author of 13 works of fiction and nonfiction. Though sometimes his prose veers toward the clichéd (“I felt like an author drawing a scene to a successful close”), not one stitch unravels in this intricately threaded narrative. And while Doig lays out the plot somewhat predictably, he also makes room for reflective moments in which Morrie confronts fears both real and imagined; it’s through these reflections that we get fine glimpses of his darker persona. “With the single-mindedness of the inebriated,” Morrie says, “I crept cautiously past, as if the yawning pit, darker than dark, might empty itself upward over me in an eruption of shadow.” In conjunction with Morrie’s interactions among the other characters, these more introspective passages help to build an appealing storytelling rhythm.

And rhythm, in the world of this novel, is anything but incidental. As the title suggests, music is as alive in these pages as it has been in any of Doig’s previous books, ennobling the miners in their struggle. When Morrie hears one “sweet damn tune” for the very first time, he makes an observation that could just as easily describe the novel itself: “It was distinctly old-fashioned, it was not particularly profound, but most of all, it was infectious.”
Ivan Doig's 'Work Song': Fictional fireworks

Julia Keller

Is Ivan Doig's 'Work Song' the best emblem of the American spirit?

Julia Keller
CULTURAL CRITIC
9:47 a.m. CDT, July 2, 2010

He skipped out of Chicago with a song in his heart and the mob on his tail. Courtesy of a long and scenic train ride, Morrie Morris ended up in Butte, Mont., a place ruled by copper and appetite — appetite for all manner of things, not just food or money or the kind of temporary affections available for easy purchase.

The year was 1919. But the time is now.

That's because in a novel like "Work Song" (Riverhead) by Ivan Doig, a story that jitters with a little something we've chosen to call the American spirit, there's no time like the present. Ostensibly, the era during which Doig's new novel takes place is just after World War I, when the world is still putting itself back together after the catastrophe that brutally thinned its ranks, but in another sense, it's happening right now too.

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Good novels do that: No dust settles on their sills. Indeed, the present leaps from Doig's lively pages. The book's events seem to have occurred some 10 seconds, not some 10 decades, ago. Butte in 1919 is right around the corner from Chicago in 2010 and the link is the American spirit, an attitude that never takes five. The United States is and always has been a nation that faces forward, it's all about tomorrow, not yesterday. A young country, comparatively speaking, and a frisky one, it finds its contentment only in discontent. Restlessness is its only true resting place.

Doig, grand storyteller that he is, understands this. His books — with "Work Song," the tally hits 13 — explore the American West with humor and pathos. His men and women are drifters, gamblers, barkeeps, landladies, cowboys, thugs, poets and librarians, and that's just the smallest peak at his census.

If you were looking for a novel that best expresses the American spirit, you'd have to ride past a lot of fence posts before finding anything as worthy as "Work Song." Narrated by Morris, a sprightly and loquacious graduate of the University of Chicago — fans of the author will recognize Morris as a refugee from another Doig
novel, "The Whistling Season" (2008), and they'll know ahead of
time that he's somewhat flexible about personal nomenclature—
the book covers the wide-open town of Butte in a wrought-up time. A big corporation pits itself against the copper
miners who want a fair wage for spending their lives in "the everlasting night of the mines." Morris takes a job in a
public library — one's task in such a place, he advises in a delightful phrase, is to be a "bartender of information"
— and tries to stay out of trouble.

Fortunately for the reader, that just can't be done.

Finding a novel that best reflects the American spirit should not be confused with the hunt for the Great American Novel. Identifying the latter is a good argument-starter at any Fourth of July picnic; it works better than butane in
lighting a high flame of hot debate. You say "Grapes of Wrath" and I say "All the King's Men" and your cousin in
the corner says "The Great Gatsby" — and we're off, pausing only to sample the deviled eggs.

The Great American Novel, whatever your choice for it may be, is probably somber and monumental. It is
probably grim and ambitious. It rings not with truth, but with Truth. Profundity is a must.

The American spirit, however, is something else. It's lighter and less earnest. A novel that reflects it isn't trying to
get its arms around everything that makes this nation distinctive and indispensable. Instead, it quivers and hums
with what Morris calls "crisp expectancy." Those two words constitute the best definition of the American spirit I've
ever read.

"Work Song" has a twinkle in its eye, even as it deals with serious topics like labor unrest and unrequited love.
Doig's writing is solid but light on its feet. Of a new acquaintance, the narrator notes, "He came at me like a wind
around a corner." Of another acquaintance, he observes, "He delivered me a look that made me want to duck." A
villain is "made of muscle, gristle, and menace."

My American spirit — yours may differ — is a blend of things: a hoot of laughter at a corny joke, a sigh at a
sunset, a grunt from hard physical labor. Doig's novel has all of that, along with passages that insist on the
beauties of literature: "Even when they are closed," Morris opines, "some books do not shut up." This is one of
those books. It would behoove you to listen.

jikeller@tribune.com

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You might be interested in:

- No fireworks, but Taste of Chicago looks to still be a hit *(Chicago Tribune)*
- Man critically injured in firework accident *(Chicago Tribune)*
- City's fireworks change dates *(Chicago Tribune)*
- What's new at Taste of Chicago 2010 *(Chicago Tribune)*

http://www.chicagotribune.com/entertainment/books/ct-ae-0704-lit-life-20100702,0,5471581.column
Dear Julia Keller--

What a grand and glorious review in the 4th of July Trib. I really appreciated the depth of your commentary. Many thanks from a grateful author.

Ivan Doig
See Work Song “on the rise” on the Indie bestseller list.

-----Original Message-----
From: Peter Reynolds [mailto:peter@bookweb.org]
Sent: Wednesday, July 07, 2010 12:11 PM
To: Nelson, Christopher (PGI)
Subject: The Indie Bestseller List for week ending July 4, 2010

You're receiving this email because of your relationship with American Booksellers Association. You may unsubscribe if you no longer wish to receive our emails.

The Indie Bestseller List
Published Thursday, July 8, 2010 (for the sales week ended Sunday, July 4, 2010). Based on reporting from many hundreds of independent bookstores across the United States. For information on more titles, please visit IndieBound.org

Booksellers: The Indie Bestseller List may be downloaded as a color PDF for display in your store.
Go to the Indie Bestseller page under the IndieBound section on BookWeb.org, or click on the bestseller link in Thursday's Bookselling This Week email.

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**Debuts** for the week:

**Hardcover Fiction**

#5-The Thousand Autumns of Jacob de Zote, by David Mitchell (9781400065455)

#13-Private, by James Patterson, Maxine Paetro (9780316096157)

#14-Mr. Peanut, by Adam Ross (9780307270702)

**Hardcover Nonfiction**

#13-Empire of the Summer Moon, by S.C. Gwynne (9781416591054)

**Paperback Fiction**

#10-Her Fearful Symmetry, by Audrey Niffenegger (9781439169018)

#14-One Day, by David Nicholls (9780307474711)

**Paperback Nonfiction**

#6-Lit, by Mary Karr (9780060596966)

#14-Resilience, by Elizabeth Edwards (9780767931564)

**Children's Interest**

#11-The Twilight Saga Eclipse: The Official Illustrated Movie Companion, by Mark Cotta Vaz (9780316087377)

#14-Star Wars: The Clone Wars Character Encyclopedia, by DK Publishing (9780756663087)

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**HARDCOVER FICTION**

1. The Girl Who Kicked the Hornet's Nest
   Stieg Larsson, Knopf, $27.95, 9780307269997

2. The Help
   Kathryn Stockett, Amy Einhorn Books/Putnam, $24.95, 9780399155345

3. The Passage
   Justin Cronin, Ballantine, $27, 9780345504968

4. Sizzling Sixteen
   Janet Evanovich, St. Martin's, $27.99, 9780312383305

5. The Thousand Autumns of Jacob de Zote- **Debut**
   David Mitchell, Random House, $26, 9781400065455

6. The Particular Sadness of Lemon Cake
   Aimee Bender, Doubleday, $25.95, 9780385501125

7. Spies of the Balkans
   Alan Furst, Random House, $26, 9781400066032

8. The Lion
   Nelson DeMille, Grand Central, $27.99, 9780446580830

9. The Overton Window
   Glenn Beck, Threshold Editions, $26, 9781439184301

10. Island Beneath the Sea
    Isabel Allende, Harper, $26.99, 9780061988240

11. The Imperfectionists
    Tom Rachman, Dial, $25, 9780385343664

12. Innocent
Scott Turow, Grand Central, $27.99, 9780446562423
13. Private- Debut
James Patterson, Maxine Paetro, Little Brown, $27.99, 9780316096157
14. Mr. Peanut- Debut
Adam Ross, Knopf, $25.95, 9780307270702
15. Matterhorn
Karl Marlantes, Atlantic Monthly, $24.95, 9780802119285
ON THE RISE:
18. Work Song
Ivan Doig, Riverhead, $25.95, 9781594487620
The wonderful new novel by the author of The Whistling Season is a July Indie Next List Great Read.

COVER NONFICTION
1. Medium Raw
Anthony Bourdain, Ecco, $26.99, 9780061718946
My Dad Says
Halpern, It Books, $15.99, 9780061992704
3. The Big Short
Michael Lewis, Norton, $27.95, 9780393072235
4. War
Sebastian Junger, Twelve, $26.99, 9780446556248
5. The Last Stand
Nathaniel Philbrick, Viking, $30, 9780670021727
6. Women Food and God
Geneen Roth, Scribner, $24, 9781416543077
7. Hitch-22
Christopher Hitchens, Twelve, $26.99, 9780446540339
8. Born to Run
Christopher McDougall, Knopf, $24.95, 9780307266309
9. Outliers
Malcolm Gladwell, Little Brown, $27.99, 9780316017923
10. Operation Mincemeat
Ben Macintyre, Harmony, $25.99, 9780307453273
11. Chelsea Chelsea Bang Bang
Chelsea Handler, Grand Central, $25.99, 9780446552448
12. The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks
Rebecca Skloot, Crown, $26, 9781400052172
13. Empire of the Summer Moon- Debut
S.C. Gwynne, Scribner, $27.50, 9781416591054
14. Spoken From the Heart
Laura Bush, Scribner, $30, 9781439155202
15. Committed
Elizabeth Gilbert, Viking, $26.95, 9780670021659
ON THE RISE:
26. Fifth Avenue, 5 A.M.
Sam Wasson, HarperStudio, $19.99, 9780061774157
Work Song - The Barnes & Noble Review

Morrie Morgan, the charmer who starred in Ivan Doig’s *The Whistling Season* as the man impressed into duty as teacher in a tiny town inundated by homesteaders in the 1907 Montana land rush, returns to Montana from a decade-plus in Australia and settles in the boisterous mining town of Butte.

*Work Song* kicks off with Morrie (whose surname is actually Llewellyn) hiding out from Chicago gangsters he fleeced in a boxing scam that ended up with his prizefighter brother dead. He stumbles into a Welsh boarding house run by a woman whose husband had died in the Spectator mine fire—the worst disaster in mining history—two years before. She and the other roomers, two retired miners, clue him in to the town’s idiosyncracies, beginning with advice to never wear the “copper collar”—i.e., become an Anaconda Copper company man. “Lowest form of life,” one of the miners tells him.

Doig’s choice of time and place offers incredible riches. “If America was a melting pot, Butte would be its boiling point,” Morrie notes. The “Richest Hill on Earth” was a boomtown in 1919, with tens of thousands of Cornish, Finnish, Irish, Italian, Serbian and Welsh miners drawn to the wages of four and a half dollars a day -- a rate to rival that of Henry Ford’s new assembly line in Detroit. Each immigrant group had its neighborhood characters and rituals, from the long-form wakes of Dublin Gulch (there was a death every week in the mines) to the saunas and polkas of Finntown.

Two years before Morrie’s arrival in Butte, a Wobbly (International Workers of the World) organizer was lynched by company goons. The head of the miners’ union, who is calling wildcat strikes to protest a dollar-a-day decrease in wages, asks Morrie’s help in keeping his miners from joining the more radical Wobbly cause.

“His conversation came off the top of his head and out his mouth seemingly without passing through his brain. It was as if he had speaking apparatus on the outside of his head, like English plumbing,” Morrie muses in a typical aside.

Morrie settles into a job in the lavishly appointed Butte Public Library, which is run by a dictatorial former rancher Sam Sandison—“he’s meaner than the devil’s half brother,” a fellow boarder warns. Sandison’s power derives from his world-class collection of leatherbound gilt-edged books. (Morrie’s delight in these books is one of the joys of *Work Song.*)

Doig underscores the slynness and wit of the miners who stood in opposition to the company. Particularly tasty is the relationship between Morgan and the two company goons who tail him when he arrives in town without luggage (his was lost). Morrie recognizes the one with the “flattened features and oxlike blink,” as a former heavyweight champion Typhoon Tolliver, made of “muscle, gristle and menace.” For his part, Tolliver sees Morrie as nothing more than “one of those outside infiltrators.”

Morrie descends into the Muckaroo mine and describes the fearsome ride down to 3,000 feet below the surface, the hellish heat, the cave-ins from nearby dynamiting explosions. His mission: to unite the miners behind a song that would measure up to the IWW’s effective “Pie in the Sky” ditty. And on Miners’ Day, the one day off for the year, he accompanies his gussied-up landlady to the company-sponsored picnic at the elegant Columbia Gardens, one of the few places in Butte with green grass.
The rollicking final chapters to *Work Song* are light-hearted in comparison to the history of this hard-scrabble, hard-luck town. But Doig, who was raised in White Sulphur Springs, gets Butte right, beginning with the rhythms of the language, which arose from the multi-ethnic stew to create an argot so tasty it also informed that prototype of hard-boiled detective novels, Dashiell Hammett’s 1929 novel *Red Harvest*. (Hammett’s Continental Op, a Pinkerton man, opened his story with a Butte character: “I first heard Personville called Poisonville by a red-haired mucker named Hickey Dewey in the Big Ship in Butte.”) Read Hammett for the grit, Doig for the lingering melody of a long-vanished era.

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**BOOKS AND AUTHORS**

**Mining town comes to life in Doig novel**

Fascinating character resurfaces in new setting in a suspenseful sequel

‘Work Song’
by Ivan Doig
Riverhead, 288 pp., $25.95

REVIEWED BY TIM MCNULTY
Special to The Seattle Times

In his best-selling 2006 novel “The Whistling Season,” set on the Montana prairie in 1909, Ivan Doig introduced the fascinating character of Morrie Morris. Young, urban, erudite and carrying the shadow of a mysterious past, Morrie electrified the students of his one-room schoolhouse and reinvigorated a prairie community.

It is 10 years later in the Seattle author’s new novel, “Work Song,” when Morrie steps off the train in the sprawling industrial mining town of Butte, Mont. World War I had ushered in a new century far removed from the prairie homesteads of a decade earlier. Electrification created an instant demand for copper wire. And the Anaconda Copper Mining Co. is hellbent on plundering the world’s largest known deposit of copper ore, “the Richest Hill on Earth,” to supply it.

Butte at the time is at a frenzied peak of activity. Nearly 100,000 souls, many from across Europe, have flocked to the promise of steady work and the decent pay of $4 and 50 cents a day. Immigrants fill Butte’s neighborhoods and swell the union rolls, but the suits at company headquarters hold all of their fates in their ledgers. A proposed pay cut during peak production sets events in motion.

With deft strokes of storytelling, Doig paints a vivid scene.

“[Butte] had witnessed a cat’s cradle of conflicts among the miners’ union, the Wobblies ... and the Wall Street-run company. There had been strikes and lockouts. Riots. Dynamings. The Anaconda Copper Mining Company bringing in goon squads. A lynching ... And even that was not the worst of the story.”

Morrie can’t help but wade into the swim of things, and soon becomes involved with a memorable cast of characters: two old hard-bitten Welsh miners and their young, widowed landlady; a waif; a former student; a union organizer; and a pair of hired thugs right out of central casting. Doig introduces Sam Sandison, a fearsome former ranch baron with a penchant for expensive rare books — and easily the most unforgettably dour librarian in all of American fiction.

“Work Song” quickly becomes a historical epic with a reach of characters worthy of Dostoevsky. All of them are herded together in a frontier mining town and sealed under the lid of an economic pressure cooker.

As in “The Whistling Season,” Morrie finds himself in a pivotal role as forces converge. But as in the earlier book, the ghosts of his past threaten to upend his efforts and place in serious danger the people he cares about most.

Doig takes his time unspooling this tale, and the suspense becomes prolonged as a major strike looms. But the revelations of Sandison and other key characters as the story reaches its climax provide ample reward.

As in the best of Doig’s fiction, the historic themes he explores are contemporary, from Wall Street arrogance to immigration, stifled dissent and ethnic mistrust. The safety of working conditions for miners is still in the headlines a century later. And corporate malfeasance resulting in ecological catastrophe (Anaconda’s copper smelting poisoned the landscape with arsenic) is playing itself out tragically in the Gulf of Mexico today.

Doig has delivered another compelling tale about America, epic as an Old West saga but as fresh and contemporary as the news.

Tim McNulty’s most recent book of poems is “Some Ducks” from Pleasure Boat Studio.

**AUTHOR APPEARANCES**

Ivan Doig

The author of “Work Song” will read from his book this week at these area locations: at 7 p.m. Tuesday at Third Place Books in Lake Forest Park (206-366-3333; www.thirdplacebooks.com), and at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday at the Eagle Harbor Book Co. on Bainbridge Island (206-842-5332; www.eagleharborbooks.com).

Doig also has appearances scheduled at these local bookstores next month: July 7 at Barnes & Noble in Seattle’s University Village shopping center; July 10 at Seattle’s Elliott Bay Book Co.; July 14 at Seattle’s University Book Store; July 17 at the Edmonds Bookshop; July 20 at Village Books in Bellingham; July 21 at The Watermark Book Co. in Anacortes and July 29 at Parkplace Books in Kirkland.
Discover wealth of talent in ‘Work Song’

CHRIS RUBICH Of The Gazette Staff

The great joys of reading a book by Montana native Ivan Doig are his keen development of character, his lyrical writing and the sense of history of Montana and nearby areas.

His latest book, “Work Song,” incorporates them all in another insightful, highly readable look at the landscape of the land and the soul.

A sequel to his 2006 bestselling “The Whistling Season,” “Work Song” has the hard-to-fail-with setting of Butte at the height of its power as a mining city.

Based in 1919, the novel is a glimpse into history just after World War I and a full-on look at conditions in the raucous town under the copper collar of the Anaconda interests.

Doig returns to the “Whistling Season” character of Morrie Morgan but brings the literature-loving teacher and accountant forward 10 years.

Stepping — luggage lost — into the volatile streets of Butte as tensions build toward a strike, Morrie brings plenty of personal baggage with him.

Lured by “the richest hill on earth,” he’s there to rebuild his life. And, as he gets caught up in the color and drama of the city, readers are the ones rewarded with rich characters and a rich read.

Doig takes advantage of the melting pot of early Butte to develop some of his most memorable characters — the retired but still heavily interested old miners, a landlady widowed in the famed Speculator Mine disaster, Morrie’s overwhelming boss at the library.

The author’s prose lends music to the novel, and Doig also writes some songs for the book.

The title themes of work and song play out again and again, from the red song book of the miners to the feisty housemate who sings in the church choir to the siren song of the mines.

Doig is a lover of language, who notes, “Language — the substance on the page, that poetry under the prose — is the ultimate ‘region,’ the truth home for a writer.”

The winner of a Wallace Stegner Award and a National Book Award finalist, he has found his home in 12 earlier books and does so again in “Work Song.”

He imbues Morrie with that love of language, of books. And the library where Morrie finds a job becomes a refuge of sorts until it is intruded upon by goons, the “shadows” that Morrie feels haunting him on Butte’s hilly, chopped-up streets.

The San Francisco Chronicle calls Doig “the reigning master of new Western literature.”

And the author’s masterful hand takes readers skillfully into the past with a human story that echoes today.

“Work Song” is scheduled for release on Tuesday and is well worth snatching up quickly as a true treasure of the summer.
Work Song By Ivan Doig

Settle in for a charming tale from the Old West

**Web exclusive**

Review by Barbara Clark

Ivan Doig, born and bred in Montana, has written many popular works of fiction about the American West. In *Work Song*, he returns to his best-selling 2008 novel *The Whistling Season* [BookPage review] and its central character, Morrie Morgan. The place: Butte, Montana of 1919, a bustling post-World War I copper mining capital, where “The Richest Hill on Earth” has enticed Morrie to try his luck at siphoning off a few of the riches said to be waiting in its famed copper veins under the earth.

*Work Song* is entertaining for its rich historical take on the town of Butte, then in its mining heyday, and for its evocative descriptions of the Anaconda Company’s copper mines. Their warren of shafts and tunnels spews forth thousands of miners, who create a human army as they leave at the end of the day’s shift. It’s a dramatic backdrop to the burgeoning labor disputes brewing between the beleaguered miners and Anaconda’s tycoons, who are sitting pretty in the town’s grand Hennessy Building.

Within this sprawling canvas, the engaging yet elusive Morrie seems a bit of a contradiction, with his charming and mild-seeming exterior and a mind crammed full of literary and historical tidbits of knowledge, while another side of his character resides in his pockets—a handy pair of brass knuckles. Morrie’s boarding house companions, attractive landlady Grace and two retired miners, Griff and Hoop, lead Morrie ever deeper into the explosive labor conflict, as it bubbles under the surface waiting to erupt. Question: Will the villains be conquered by—a *song*?

Morrie craftily matches wits with two hilarious company goons, Eel Eyes and Typhoon Tolliver. There’s also a fleet-footed urchin straight out of Dickens, so skinny he’s given the name Russian Famine. And, looming large, the mysterious librarian Sam Sandison, who hires Morrie to work amidst his stunning gold and leather book collection. Add a stoic and wily labor organizer and his sparkly fiancée, an old friend to Morrie, and the book comes to life in Doig’s engaging and magical prose.

Rather than blowing you off the page, Doig’s writing has a settling effect; as in, you settle comfortably into your chair, confident you’ll be enjoying every bit of his breathtaking storytelling prowess.
Another beauty.

From: Walker, Alan  
Sent: Wednesday, May 19, 2010 10:40 AM  
To: Saletan, Rebecca; Kloske, Geoffrey; Sorensen, Stephanie; Clemens, Sara; Leet, Tanya; Ridge, Daniel; Walker, Alan  
Subject: WORK SONG LJ review


Doig’s eagerly awaited sequel to *The Whistling Season* (2006) begins ten years later in 1919, when Morrie Morgan gets off the train in Butte, MT, “the richest hill on earth,” run by Anaconda Copper. He settles into a boardinghouse run by the widow Grace and is befriended by her other boarders, Griff and Hoop, two retired miners who tell Morrie what’s going on in town. Scholarly Morrie finds his niche at the public library, the domain of a crusty retired rancher named Sandison, who comes with the territory because the entire library is his own magnificent book collection. Before long, Morrie discovers he’s being shadowed by Anaconda’s thugs for being a strike agitator, when, in fact, he tries not to take sides in the miners vs. Anaconda dispute. He can’t stay neutral for long, however—his knowledge of bookkeeping provides the miners’ union with a bargaining chip. His musical talent helps 200 tough, rock-hard miners, smuggled into the library basement after hours, compose a rousing strike song that will bolster their courage during coming hard times. **VERDICT** Doig delivers solid storytelling with a keen respect for the past and gives voice to his characters in a humorous and affectionate light. Recommend this to everyone you know; essential. [See Prepub Alert, *LJ* 3/1/10.]

—Donna Bettencourt, Mesa Cty. P.L., Grand Junction, CO
Fiction

★ Gold Boy, Emerald Girl

The nine brilliant stories in Li’s collection (after The Vagrants) offer a frighteningly lucid vision of human fate. In the title story, motherless Siyu has long been in love with an older zoology professor, Dai, who suddenly wants Siyu, 38 and single, to marry his 42-year-old son, Hanfeng. In “A Man Like Him,” retired art teacher Fei embarks on a strange quest after reading a story about a website devoted to shaming a man who left his wife. Fei seeks out the man, needing to confide in him his own sordid brush with infamy. The collection’s magnificent centerpiece is “Kindness,” the novella-length reminiscence of a spiritually dependent math teacher named Moyan, whose bleak story begins with the emotional starvation she suffered from her adoptive parents and grizzly continues over the years as two older women—an English teacher and Moyan’s army superior—accord her unsuccessfully, to teach out to her. Li’s description of army life, and particularly her description of Moyan’s regimen’s march across Mojin Desi, is a bravura piece of writing, but it’s Moyan’s evolution from pitiable to borderline heroic (in her own way) that is Li’s greatest achievement. (Spt.)

The Lady Matador’s Hotel

Sensual prose softens the crushing blows that life doles out to almost every character in this latest from Garcia (Dreaming in Cuban), in which six lives cross paths in a luxury hotel somewhere in the tropics of Central America. It’s a gloomy portrait of modern life, told through a series of vivid, Sometimes fantastical, narrative moments. In the honeymoon suite, a Korean businessman contemplates suicide as his pregnant 15-year-old mistress flits around dressed up like a bar- from a bygone era. On the rooftop, a waitress and ex-guerrilla Aura Estrada sips tea with her dead brother, who warns her of the arrival of the colonel who killed him. Marrief Abe, the corpulent colonel, plots against leftovers, curtsies the wife who’s left him, and lusts after the most talked about guest in the hotel: Suk Kucay, also known as the Lady Matador. A Californian of Mexican and Japanese descent, Suk is in town to fight in the first ever Battle of the Lady Matadors in the Americas. The sultry atmosphere, dash of the supernatural, and well-developed characters are a winning mix, and the story’s many parts move with frictionless ease. (Spt.)

Serious Men

Joseph, an editor of magazines in India, sets up in his debut a subtly wicked satire of subservience and ambition that bounces between the Mumbai tenement where low-caste Ayan Mani lives, and the European research institute where he laboras as the assistant of top researcher Arvind Acharya. Forever spiteful toward his privileged superiors, Ayan is deviously mischievous and pulls off a stunt that ends with his half-deaf (but otherwise ordinary) son being proclaimed in the local news as a boy genius. Meanwhile, Arvind is obsessed with proving his theory that extraterrestrial microbes are raining down on Earth from the upper atmosphere. While his theory is promising, an affair with a seductive astrobiologist threatens to cost him his life’s work. Naturally, the conniving Ayan is involved there as well. While Ayan’s inspired smalltime villainy drives the narrative and provides more than its share of humor, it’s occasionally undermined by overheated prose and uneven pacing that spirals into a pas- sicked climax near the end. Overall, though, this is a sharp, au courant satire, like a more mannered White Tiger. (Aug.)

The Pindar Diamond

In Hickman’s coincidence-heavy latest (after The Asbury Gate), Paul Pindar, a 17th-century English merchant working in Venice, is obsessed with the Sultan’s Blue, a 322-carat diamond coveted by every collector in the plague-ravaged city. Pindar, broke from drinking and gambling, needs the diamond to ransom his captive love from a sultan’s harem. Interwoven with his story are those of Sister Annette, a convent novice who alone knows how the Sultan’s Blue came to Venice, and Maryam, an acrobat charged with escorting a crippled mute and her deformed newborn (who might be a mermaid) to Venice. When Pindar learns that the Sultan’s Blue will be the prize in a high-stakes card game, he desperately tries to scheme his way to the table, going against warnings from fellow traders Ambrose Smith, a covert intelligence, and John Carew, a friend with his own secret. Though the narrative moves from Pindar to Annette to Maryam in a frustratingly helterskelter fashion, Hickman provides a convincing portrait of a troubled Venice that will tide readers over until the story elements click into place just in time for a series of satisfying resolutions. (Aug.)

★ Work Song
Ivan Doig, Riverhead, $25.95 (288p) ISBN 978-1-59448-176-0

Doig affectionately revisits Morris “Morrie” Morgan from the much-heralded The Whistling Season. Now, 10 years later, in 1919, Morrie lives in Butte, Mont., beholding the area’s natural beauty that “made a person look twice.” Scoring a job is a top priority, as is getting more face time with Grace Faraday, theAlluring widow who runs the boarding-
house where he stays. Things, naturally, are complicated, as the fiendishly bookish Morrie is on the run from Chicago gangsters who feel they’ve been duped after he scored a windfall from a fixed sports wager. The local ‘thieves’ at the duplicitous Anacostia Copper Mining Company, meanwhile, find Morrie’s sudden interest in Burte highly suspicious as they try to bully Grace into selling her property. Morrie lands what might be an ideal job working at the public library with exotic rancher Samuel Sandison, though our sturdy narrator must choose sides when the mining company ups the ante. Drama ebbs and flows as Morrie yields to the plight of union leader Jared Evans, and Morrie and Samuel come to terms with sites from their pasts. Charismatic dialogue and charming, homespun characters make Doug’s latest another surefire winner. (July)

Midnight Angels
Lorenzo Carcaterra. Ballantine. $25 (320p)
ISBN 978-0-345-48390-4

This superior religious artifact quest thriller from Carcaterra (Slayer) courses through the streets of Florence with quick stops at various museums and galleries for interesting sidebars on the life and work of Michelangelo (“the Divine One”). Two major groups are trying to find three Michelangelo statues, the Midnight Angels, long thought to be myth rather than reality: the secretive Vittoria Society, whose members locate stolen and lost art objects and return them to their rightful owners, and the Immortals, led by the Raven, a master thief who’s as dangerous as he is ruthless. Early on, Kate Voorhees, an American art student in Florence and the ward of the Vittoria Society’s leader, tracks down the Midnight Angels, aided by her handsome Italian boyfriend, Marco. Many people die as Kate and friends fight to prevent the Immortals from stealing the Angels. The author’s solid, well-executed premise will keep readers turning the pages. (July)

Damaged: A Maggie O’Dell Novel
Alex Kava. Doubleday. $24.95 (272p)

At the start of Kava’s exciting, if grisly, eighth Maggie O’Dell novel (after Black Friday), Liz Bailey, a 27-year-old Coast Guard rescue swimmer, retrieves aainless

[Q&A]

PW Talks with Sefi Atta
Divided Loyalties

Sefi Atta grew up in Nigeria, was schooled in England, and lives in Mississippi. Her excellent new collection, News from Home (reviewed on page 29), touches on a wide array of lives, from privileged Nigerians in London to a villager facing a possible death sentence.

How has your experience as a Nigerian who was schooled in England and now lives in Meridian, Miss., informed your fiction?

In my work I feel free to revisit those places. My mother is Yoruba Anglican, my late father was from a Muslim family, though nonpracticing. Because my parents both spoke different languages, we spoke English at home. Nigeria was a British colony, so it wasn’t unusual for people to speak English. Coming to England at 14 years old, I wasn’t alone; there were other students from Nigeria. But I think that was the first time I understood what it was to be a foreigner and to deal with others’ perceptions of Africans.

You have lived in Mississippi for 13 years, yet create Nigerian characters with such a fresh and irreverent immediacy—corrupt officials, Muslim zealots, pampered n’grits, hustlers, polygamous husbands.

News from Home was informed by online news reports. My characters are imaginary, but imagination for me is just playing around with reality and fact. So my characters are based on people I know, people I’ve met, seen, or heard about or read about. I go to Nigeria often and have always been part of Nigerian communities overseas. Naturally, I’m drawn to the more interesting headlines. I think I have a curiosity about religion coming from a family like mine, and I believed what they told me, that you can follow both religions without conflict. But in the real world it doesn’t work like that. People take their differences very seriously. At what point did you make the break-through from being an accountant to being a writer?

I became a writer because I had stories to tell. I did an M.F.A. at Amherst University in 2001 and worked on radio plays, short stories, and also worked on my first novel. My experience has been very old-school, publishing story by story, some in Africa, though mostly here, in contests. In Mississippi, I’m so far removed from what’s going on in the literary marketplace. I look at Meridian as a writer’s retreat. People here don’t know I write. I’m free, in a sense.

Is it difficult for you living in the Deep South?

In my life I’ve had to deal with xenophobia and sexism, here in Mississippi as well because the culture is conservative and patriarchal. I also have to deal with people who don’t understand my culture, or people who treat me differently because I’m a woman, but I never see myself as a victim. If I had to fight every battle, I would be fighting every moment. I live quite peacefully, and through writing I express a lot of frustration.

—Amy Boaz

WWW.PUBLISHERSWEEKLY.COM 25
Kirkus Reviews  
April 15, 2010  
WORK SONG  
By Ivan Doig

Returning to Montana in 1919, ten years after he pinch-hit as a rural schoolteacher in The Whistling Season (2006), Morris Morgan finds the city of Butte roiled by labor unrest.

The Anaconda Copper Mining Company has just imposed a 22 percent pay cut that has union leader Jared Evans reluctantly planning a strike if the company won’t negotiate in good faith. Morrie is sympathetic, particularly since Jared is engaged to one of his former students, but he’s more interested in finding a job and getting better acquainted with Grace Faraday, the feisty widowed proprietress of his boardinghouse. After an unsatisfactory stint at a funeral home—the booze wakes are too hard on his head—Morrie’s scholarly savoir faire gets him hired by Samuel Sandison, an eccentric former rancher who runs the Butte public library (mostly because the trustees covet his magnificent book collection). Unfortunately, Morrie gets noticed by two of Anaconda’s goons, who think that a guy arriving in Butte with a sketchy back story and without a trunk must be one of those radical outside agitators the company likes to string up from time to time. Since Morrie is still on the lam from Chicago gangsters who took a dim view of his winning money from them by betting on a fixed fight, he’s not eager to have anyone poking around in his past. So it’s maybe not the smartest move to agree to let the union hold clandestine meetings at the library, especially since Sandison has warned him against taking sides, but Morrie can’t help getting involved when his sympathies are roused. His debonair, mildly sardonic voice makes Morrie an engaging narrator/protagonist, though the novel’s most riveting character is Sandison, who atones for past misdeeds with an appropriately bookish contribution to the union’s struggle.

More atmospheric, pleasingly old-fashioned storytelling from Doig (The Eleventh Man, 2008, etc.), whose ear for the way people spoke and thought in times gone by is as faultless as ever.
A world unto themselves

A mesmerizing novel of three brothers' reclusive life—and a death—on their farm

‘Kings of the Earth’
by Jon Clinch
Random House, 393 pp., $26

REVIEWED BY MOIRA MACDONALD
Special to The Seattle Times

"On a farm you live around death your whole life," says one of the characters in Jon Clinch's mesmerizing novel "Kings of the Earth"; it's a plain spoken statement that sums up the book—and a way of life. Ranging from the 1930s to 1990 and back again, the novel uses many voices to tell the story of three brothers, and how death briefly threatened to change a life that was seemingly unchangeable.

Vernon, Audie and Creed Proctor lived on the same rural New York farm their entire lives, in companionable squalor. Though friendly with their immediate neighbors, “the boys” generally remained isolated on their property—their primitive way of life, not to mention their stench, made them the local eccentrics. One morning, the brothers woke in the filthy bed they had shared since childhood to find that Vernon, the oldest, had died; or, in Audie’s words, “went on ahead.”

Local law enforcement suspect foul play, and suddenly Audie and Creed are dragged into a world as foreign to them as the “Dragnet” reruns they watch on their ancient, flickering TV.

The story is based loosely on the case of the real-life Ward brothers, whose murder trial became the subject of an acclaimed 1992 documentary “Brother’s Keeper.” But Clinch, in his second novel (after 2007’s “Finn”), is less interested in plot and legalities than in minds. "Kings of the Earth" is structured as a series of brief narratives by many characters, spanning many decades: the brothers; their closest neighbors, Preston and Margaret; their parents, Lester and Ruth; their sister, Donna (the only one of their generation to leave the farm); husband and son, and the suspicious yet sympathetic state trooper. These passages meet up and overlap like worn-soft patchwork, creating a vivid picture of first three, then two men content in a life of hard work and little comfort. Donna, asked to explain her brothers’ closeness, says that they “stuck together in a way that most people don’t any more. A way that most people probably can’t even imagine… Sometimes she thought they had a kind of group consciousness, if that made any sense.”

We’re given detailed portraits of a pig slaughter, of the bone-chilling cold of an uninsulated farmhouse, of what sheets look like when they haven’t been laundered in decades, of how these old men appeared to an outsider eye. (They move “like the ghosts of drowned men traversing the ocean floor. Their pale hair and their pale beards waved in the light wind as on deep currents.”) Clinch’s language is simple and his sentences rhythmic, like an old storyteller spinning a familiar yarn at leisure in front of a fire, and from it these characters gain an unexpected nobility.

"Kings of the Earth” occasionally falters, in a subplot involving Donna’s family that’s less compelling than the Proctor brothers’ story (though intertwined with it). But overall, it’s the sort of book you race through then read again more slowly, savoring each voice. Preston, the kindly neighbor who cheerfully admits he doesn’t entirely understand the Proctors, says, “Where a man comes from isn’t enough. You’ve got to go all the way back to the seed of a man and the planting of it, and a person can’t go back that far ever I don’t think.” Clinch goes back to that seed and that planting, and readers will eagerly go with him.

Moira Macdonald is the movie critic of The Seattle Times.

AUTHOR APPEARANCE

Jon Clinch

The author of “Kings of the Earth” will read at 7 p.m. Wednesday at Seattle’s Elliott Bay Book Co. (206-624-6600 or www.elliotbaybook.com).

BEST-SELLERS

As reported by Publishers Weekly

Hardcover fiction
1. Stzlxeen, Janet Evanovich
2. The Girl Who Kicked the Hornet’s Nest, Stieg Larsson
3. The Overton Window, Glenn Beck
4. The Lion, Nelson DeMille
5. Family Ties, Danielle Steel
6. The Help, Kathryn Stockett
7. The Passage, Justin Cronin
8. Whiplash, Catherine Coulter
9. Frankenstei!: Lost Souls, Dean Koontz
10. Dead in the Family, Charlae Harris

Hardcover nonfiction
1. Sh’t My Dad Says, Justin Halpern
2. Medium Raw, Anthony Bourdain
3. Women Food and God, Geneen Roth
4. The Big Short, Michael Lewis
5. Chelsea Chelsea Bang Bang, Chelsea Handler
6. Spoken from the Heart, Laura Bush
7. War, Sebastian Junger
8. Delivering Happiness, Tony Hsieh
9. Empire of the Summer Moon, S.C. Gwynne
10. Uncharted Territori, Tori Spelling McClatchy Newspapers

LOCAL SCENE

Current best-sellers at Island Books, 3014 78th Ave. S.E., Mercer Island (206-232-6952)

Hardcover
1. The Girl Who Kicked the Hornet’s Nest, Stieg Larsson
2. The Passage, Justin Cronin
3. Work Song, Ivan Doig
4. Operation Mincemeat: How a Dead Man and a Bizarre Plan Fooled the Nazis and Assured an Allied Victory, Ben Macintyre
5. The Imperfectionists, Tom Rachman

Paperback
1. Cutting for Stone, Abraham Verghese
2. The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo, Stieg Larsson
3. Half the Sky: Turning Oppression Into Opportunity for Women Worldwide, Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn
4. The Girl Who Played With Fire, Stieg Larsson
5. The Lost City of Z: A Tale of Deadly Obsession in the Amazon, David Grann
Book review: 'Work Song' by Ivan Doig

The author's follow-up to 'The Whistling Season' is set in post World War I Butte, Mont., and populated with fascinating characters.

In one of the memorable broadcast talks that did so much to confirm the late Patrick Kavanagh's reputation as a major poet, Seamus Heaney cannily observed that while the onetime County Monaghan farmer's focus was — in the best sense — parochial, his sensibility never was provincial.

Something similar could be said of the best American writing among the works we tend — for no better reason than convenience — to classify as "regional literature." Ivan Doig is an exemplary regional voice in American letters, which simply means he is a very fine writer who has chosen to site his work in the West, particularly in Montana, where he was born and grew up. "Work Song" is his 10th novel — a sequel to his bestselling "The Whistling Season" — and as enjoyable and subtly thought-provoking a piece of fiction as you're likely to pick up this summer. It's a book that can be appreciated just for the quality of the prose and the author's adherence to the sturdy conventions of old-fashioned narrative or for Doig's sly gloss on Western genre fiction and unforced evocation of our current condition — or, better yet, for all those things.
"Work Song" is set in the strife-torn year of 1919. World War I is newly over, and its veterans have returned to their jobs. The "Red Scare" has begun, and conflict between capital and labor is endemic with the radical International Workers of the World vying with more traditional trade unions for workers' loyalty. Doig again sets his story in Montana, but not the familiar "big sky country" with its rolling short grass prairies to the east and deep forested river valleys to the west. This story is played out entirely in the industrialized cities of Butte and Anaconda — then the copper mining and smelting centers of a burgeoning U.S. economy.

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This is the unfamiliar urban West, and the ranchers, farmers, cowboys and Native Americans who populate most fiction about the region are mentioned only in passing. Butte in those years was called "the richest hill on earth" and its people came from all the immigrant groups that had left their countries to do this nation's hard work, particularly underground — the Irish, Welsh, Cornishmen and by 1919 the Ruthenians. (In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Butte had the second-largest Irish population outside Dublin.)

Readers of "The Whistling Season" will be happy to reacquaint themselves with its engaging protagonist and first-person narrator, Morris (Morrie) Morgan, an itinerant school teacher, University of Chicago-educated polymath and all-around charmer. (It's not necessary to have read the earlier novel, as "Work Song" artfully provides all the essential details.) The name, of course, is simply one of Morrie's disguises, for he's a fugitive twice over — once from the Chicago gambling syndicate he and his boxer brother crossed and again from the Montana hamlet where he taught school and which he fled to disentangle himself from an impossible romance with his dead brother's widow, Rose, who locals believed was his sister.

In the intervening 10 years, Morrie has traveled the world and now has drifted back to Montana, partly in hope of recharging his finances in Butte, partly for proximity to Rose, now married. Unfortunately, the railroad's loss of Morrie's trunk means he has arrived in town carrying only a single satchel. That plus his having no visible means of support quickly attracts the attention of a pair of Anaconda Co. goons, who are convinced he's a "red" and "up to something." They'll dog his heels through much of the book. One of this novel's pleasures is the rich cast of secondary characters Doig effortlessly sketches into his narrative. Grace, the attractive young widow who runs the boarding house where Morrie lands and the two elderly Welsh miners who are her other lodgers are among them. So too the unctuous Scandinavian mortician to whom Morrie applies for his first job in Butte in this memorable example of his charm:

"My funerary experience is not vast,' I admitted, 'yet I have been fortunate enough to be an observer at some historically solemn occasions. I happened to witness the funeral procession of Edvard Grieg to name one.'

"In Oslo?" He straightened up like a stork on the alert.'

"There under the Scandinavian sky of heroes, with his own music resounding like the heartbeat of the fjords.'

"What did they lay him in?" he whispered.

"Rosewood," came to mind.

"The diamond of woods," Peterson uttered with reverence…

Morrie is hired as a "cryer," the funeral home's official representative at the nightly wakes held by its mostly Irish clientele. It's a job that provides him with free drink and food and an introduction to the local miners and their union. Soon, however, he moves on to a position in the town library, which is run by Sam Sandison, a grandly imperious, bibliomaniacal ex-rancher, who secured the job by loaning his own vast collection of fine and rare books to form the nucleus of the public collection. The white-bearded Sandison is a figure of fear to the locals who, for reasons they refuse to discuss, refer to him as the "Earl of Hell." He makes Morrie his assistant, partly because Morrie's a walking literary encyclopedia and partly because his bookkeeping skills are useful to a boss who's been fiddling the budget to finance his passion for rare books.

Before long, Morrie — who simply wants to stay out of harm's way and hit a few of the wagers he likes to place — has encountered an ex-student of his, now herself a teacher, and her fiery fiancé, leader of the local miners' union. They quickly enmesh Morrie in the never-ending struggle with the company and the vicious competition with the unseen but omnipresent Wobblies. Before the story resolves itself in a comprehensive but somewhat breakneck conclusion, the significance of the title will become clear and Sandison — who turns out to be a man with a terrible secret and a stricken conscience — will come to play an unexpected, deeply satisfying role. To reveal more would spoil things, but keep in mind the year 1919 and the national pastime.

Morrie and Sanderson are, in some ways, a knowing inversion of the knight-errant, gun-slinging drifters and ranchers whom one finds in genre Westerns, while the organized miners in "Work Song" subtly play against the individualistic types that fill those conventional pages. The unseen antagonists in the Anaconda Co. executive suites high above Butte's turbulent streets manage to evoke something of our own financially troubled times. Doig, however, is too good a novelist to insist that those subtexts do more than whisper for themselves, and that tact makes "Work Song" a pleasure to read.

timothy.rutten@latimes.com
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OregonLive: Ivan Doig's 'Work Song': Sequels with Morrie

Ivan Doig's 2006 novel "The Whistling Season" is narrated by Paul Milliron, a school superintendent in the 1950s who looks back on his life as a boy on the Montana prairie in 1909. Another character, loquacious schoolteacher Morrie Morgan, steals the narrative away from Milliron and his family.

"He was wildly popular with readers," Doig said from his home in Seattle. "People would say to me, 'I wish I had a teacher like him.' I couldn't get him out of my head."

Doig said Milliron was "a very bright kid who goes to school in a one-room schoolhouse and does his chores faithfully, much like I was." Morgan, on the other hand, "with his erudition and free-form flights of rhetoric, his glories in the music of English and Latin," was someone he wanted to spend more time around.

"I couldn't resist," Doig said, laughing.

"Work Song," Doig's new novel, is narrated by Morgan. It takes place 10 years after "The Whistling Season," in 1919, and begins with Morgan stepping off the train in Butte, Mont., "with nothing else around but the Rocky Mountains and the witnessing sky." Morgan is soon involved in a series of adventures in a town that, like the character, Doig found irresistible.

"I felt like I had been dealt a pair of aces," Doig said of Morgan and Butte. "Butte was such an amazing place, rough and tough and so on but with real pretensions to be something else. It was the biggest city in the northern Rockies at that time, almost 100,000 people, and full of all sorts of people who came there for the money. I'm from the other Montana, you know. Some of the places I grew up weren't big enough to be called towns, and Butte was like Las Vegas to us."

Copper was king in Butte, and the Anaconda Copper Mining Co. ruled the kingdom with a copper fist. The company was known for treating its workers poorly and Doig said he had "no qualms about making (it) the villain of the story. Every time they had the chance to cut wages or sic the goons on the workers or call in the National Guard, they did it."

"Work Song" is Doig's 10th novel and his first for a different publisher, Riverhead Books. His longtime editor, Becky Saletan, is editorial director at Riverhead and brought Doig with her from Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. He calls Saletan "one of the three essential women who prop me up," along with his agent, Liz Darhansoff, and his wife, Carol. Doig said his wife "has a pretty good sense of plot" and he shows her his novels at about 50 pages and 125 pages to get a sense of how the
narrative is moving along.

Doig reads from "Work Song" at 7:30 p.m. Friday, July 23, at Powell's City of Books, 1005 W. Burnside St.

-- Jeff Baker

Excerpted from OregonLive : Ivan Doig's 'Work Song': Sequels with Morrie
http://mobile.oregonlive.com/advorg/db_96620/contentdetail.htm;jsessionid=1C211477DB0F214C01C480CA3B79C1DF?
contentguid=lcq3gk1u&detailindex=0&pn=0&ps=5&full=true#display

Readability — An Arc90 Laboratory Experiment
http://lab.arc90.com/experiments/readability
of bumbling insecurities (Emma’s), overweening showbiz arrogance (Dexter’s, when he becomes a television star), slow but sure pacing, humorous though seldom outright funny dialogue and authentically troubling coming-of-age issues.

Other, similar writers (like Mr. Hornby in his recent “Juliet, Naked”) mine this same vein, but they tell more perversely complicated stories. Mr. Nicholls uses his adroit professionalism for something more handily miraculous: sweetening the journey from fiery, idealistic dreaminess into unforgiving middle age.

There’s divorce, and then there’s Daley Amory’s splintered brood. On one side: a liberal, socially conscious mother who nurtures good deeds more effectively than her own children. On the other, a conservative, booze-soaked dad whose place of worship is his New England country club and who recites pornography on family vacations. With a “Hop in, sugar,” Daley’s mom whisks the 11-year-old girl away, but only temporarily. Daley is simultaneously in thrall and undone by her father, whose succession of wives, spiraling alcoholism and wildly erratic behavior finally push them apart. Years go by; marked by distance and brief, painful visits. Just as Daley is poised to start her dream job and move into a California cottage with her doting boyfriend, her father nosesives, and Daley moves back home and tries to save him.

The Blind Contessa’s New Machine

By Carey Wallace

207 pages. Pamela Dorman Books/ Viking. $23.95.

The Contessa Carolina Fantoni is a 19th-century Italian beauty and a loner who spends her youth in blissfully unattended reverie at a lakeside cottage on her family’s property. Carolina’s childhood friend and neighbor, the eccentric inventor Pellegrino Turri, is older by a decade, but the two are bound by their curiosity and quirks. Shortly after becoming engaged to the town’s most eligible bachelor, Carolina realizes that her eyesight is slowly slipping away. But nobody believes her except for Turri. As the real world fades, Carolina begins to see in her dreams. And when her marriage goes the way of her vision, Carolina and Turri’s long-dormant passion blossoms into something potent enough to inspire the invention of . . . the typewriter. If the story sounds familiar, that’s because Carey Wallace based her debut novel — it feels more like a fairy tale, really — on a true story.

Work Song

By Ivan Doig

275 pages. Riverhead Books. $25.95.

It’s 1919 in bustling Butte, Mont., the copper capital of the world, when Morris Morgan steps off the train and into a fiery labor dispute involving the Anaconda mining company, the radical Wobbly agitators and the local union members. A charming intellectual with a dangerous secret, Morrie endears himself to Grace, a young widow who runs a boardhouse, and to a rancher turned librarian, Sam Sandison. But after a chance encounter with his former student Rabrab (who along with Morrie was last seen in Mr. Doig’s 2006 novel “The Whistling Season”), he is catapulted into the nerve center of the miners’ union and the crosshairs of Anaconda’s thugs. World War I has just ended, but evergreen themes abound: environmental catastrophe, mine safety and corporate corruption.
Bankrupt resort founder Edra Blixseth faces criminal probe

Investigators are probing the activities of Yellowstone Club co-founder Edra Blixseth, centering on a series of multimillion dollar loans she may have obtained with false claims on the case. But sworn depositions and interviews with key parties indicate former club owner Edra Blixseth centers in the federal investigation.

Blixseth's former bookkeeper has been questioned by the FBI, and her former office manager has hired a prominent Montana criminal defense attorney. Criminal charges in the case would be another stain on the swank Yellowstone Club, a millionaires-only private ski and golf resort near Yellowstone National Park. The club counts Bill Gates and Dan Quayle among its 300 members, yet spiraled into bankruptcy when the collapse of the real estate market exposed its massive debts.

It has since emerged from bankruptcy under new ownership. Edra Blixseth's ex-husband, Tim, was the first to make public the criminal probe against her. Edra Blixseth, meanwhile, said that she's been contacted by the FBI several times over the last two-and-a-half years — although to talk about investigations into her ex-husband, not herself.

Her attorneys have accused Tim Blixseth in court filings of carrying out a "personal vendetta" against Edra Blixseth through surrogates.

More Blixseth | A10

Edra Blixseth arrives at Russell Smith Federal Courthouse in Missoula with her boyfriend, actor Jack Scalia, as part of bankruptcy proceedings related to The Yellowstone Club on April 30, 2009.

The Other Montana

In his latest novel, 'Work Song,' Ivan Doig paints a vivid portrait of 1919 Butte in stark contrast to the ranchlands of his youth

In 1980, Ivan Doig's memoir "This House of Sky" introduced readers to the Montana of his childhood, the rolling range-land and high mountain prairies where ranchers like his father would trail sheep in search of grass while bearing the sting of Montana winters and brutal isolation.

Over the next 30 years of his brilliant literary career, Doig has returned often to the landscapes of his childhood, putting his fic-tional characters in ranch houses, one-room schoolhouses and farm towns, invariably east of the Continental Divide.

But in his latest effort, "Work Song," Doig brings readers to what he recently called "the other Montana," Butte in 1919, a city of almost 100,000 people brimming with wealth and humanit.y. The book follows Morris "Morgan" Morgan, also the main char-acter of Doig's best selling novel "The Whistling Season," as he moves from the eastern plains to Butte in hopes of finding riches.

Doig, 71, will appear in Bozeman at several events Thursday. He will have a book signing at the County Bookshelf at 11:30 a.m. That evening, he will speak at the 17th annual Friends of MSU Libraries fall fundraiser dinner and auction.

For more about Doig's talk at the 17th annual fall library fundraiser dinner and auction, which benefits the Montana State University Friends of the MSU Libraries, call 994-3119.

For more about Doig's talk at the 17th annual fall library fundraiser dinner and auction, which benefits the Montana State University Friends of the MSU Libraries, call 994-3119.


No Social Security increase in 2011

Government expected to announce second year with no cost of living increase to Social Security payments

WASHINGTON — As if voters don't have enough to be angry about this election year, the government is expected to announce this week that more than 58 million Social Security recipients will go through another year without an increase in their monthly benefits.

It would mark only the second year without an increase since automatic adjustments for inflation were adopted in 1975. The first year was this year.

"If you're the ruling party, this is not the sort of thing you want to have happening two weeks before an election," said Andrew Biggs, a former deputy commis-sioner at the Social Security Ad-ministration and now a resident scholar at...
Foreclosures/ from A1

In the near term, the freezes could actually benefit both homeowners and the housing market. Homeowners would have time to work rent-free and chip away at their debt. Prices might stabilize because so many homes are penned up.

But the long-term implications are grave. Only a month ago, housing watcher Mark Zandi, chief economist at Moody’s Analytics, predicted that a housing recovery would be under way by the third quarter of next year. Now he believes the foreclosure scandal could prolong the housing depression for at least another few years.

The alleged document fraud could open up the entire chain of foreclosure proceedings to legal challenge. Some foreclosures could be overturned, others deemed outright fraudulent.

Before a housing recovery can occur, all those foreclosed properties have to be re-scouritized by the banks and then sold. With any foreclosure-related deal open to legal challenge, inventory could be taken off the market while the legal challenges make their way through the courts.

That’s not to mention the questions being raised about missing paper trails on mortgages owned by people who have never missed a payment.

What started as simple paperwork bungling in a Pennsylvania office park now threatens to bring to a standstill the nation’s entire foreclosure machinery. The development is especially troubling given how large the foreclosure market is. Before the scandal erupted, foreclosers at John Burns Real Estate Consulting predicted that 41 percent of residential sales this year would be on distressed properties. Typically, distressed properties account for 7 percent.

Since housing is the engine that in the past seven recessions has pulled the economy out of recession, any further damage couldn’t come at a worse time.
Excitement Returns to PNBA

by Wendy Werras
Oct 12, 2010

An atmosphere of excitement and optimism missing in recent years permeated the Pacific Northwest Booksellers Association fall trade show held in Portland, Ore., on October 7-9 at the Portland Marriott Holiday Inn and conference center. "We’re up 10% this year," an enthusiastic Maggie Freitag, owner of Parnassus Books in Ketchikan, Alaska, said on Friday. "Even though there were 250,000 fewer cruise ship travelers this summer, we made up the difference because people are just buying more books." The Fishes and Dishes Cookbook (Epicerie, 2010), which Parnassus has sold 420 copies of since April, boosted sales at the store. One of the values of attending the show for Freitag is the opportunity to sometimes get free freight on orders placed there, which makes a considerable difference because of Alaska’s remote location. "This is a great show," Freitag added. "It’s important for us to come and network. We place a lot of orders here as well."

The Thursday schedule was dominated by a variety of educational panels and Rep’s Picks offerings, 17 in all, which were very well attended. "Digital Content, Social Networking and Your Store" featured a presentation of Copia Interactive’s new Web-based sales and social networking program for booksellers by JoAnn Spyker, the company’s v.p. of field dales and higher education, and generated a lively discussion. "Copia is a consumer marketplace for all of digital media – books, music, movies, and magazines – all the things we like to share with our friends. Our program is about content, commerce, and community," Spyker said.

The program, which will be offered free to booksellers, takes store customers to a Web site that will be branded to the individual bookstore but powered by Copia. When the initial purchase is made, the customer will be given a personal web page designed to encourage social networking with friends and other Copia users that includes discussions about books and other media. Unlike GoodReads and Facebook, Copia functions as a commerce site where five million titles are available for sale in all formats. Spyker demurred on an exact comparison figure that Copia will charge, but did say that it will be somewhere between 30% and 50% of the retail price.

"Copia is a marriage between Facebook and Amazon," Spyker explained. It's not intended to be a replacement for ABA’s IndieCommerce, although Meg Smith, ABA’s membership and marketing officer, did say that the organization is meeting with Copia and will discuss a possible partnership after Spyker’s presentation to the organization. The booksellers at the Thursday panel raised many questions about the integrity of Copia’s program, one asking, "How do we justify throwing the indie-local movement back into big commerce?" Copia is owned by DMC Worldwide, a large product development, sales channel, and supply chain management company. We treat people like customers, not transactions," Spyker responded. "In fact, the first point of entry, the bookstore customer first purchases from, keeps the customer for life." Franz Hasslacher of Eckhls Books in Manzanita, Ore. objected to Copia on the grounds that it’s similar to a pyramid scheme. "If a customer gets poor service from an indie bookstore and switches to a different one, or if a customer moves to a different area, the Copia customer I.D. makes it impossible to switch to a bookstore of choice."

Spyker also announced that Copia’s e-reading devices will be ready "before the holidays." They will be offered as hand-held, 3-G, or touch screen devices that can be purchased directly at the bookstore or on the store’s site, although pricing information is not yet available.

The PNBA membership meeting on Thursday was moderated by board president Sylla McStellar and executive director Thom Chambless. "We’re guardedly optimistic about next year," Chambless said. "In 2009 we predicted a net loss of $90,000 for the organization and in reality this turned out to be $63,000." Income from the holiday catalogue and sales of the Eat, Sleep, Read calendar contributed to this positive adjustment, as well as a general budget cut of $100,000 that included a move to less expensive office space. "The association is very sound financially," added Chambless. Both author breakfasts and the dinner were sold out, and attendance was up overall at the show this year.

Tracy Taylor of Elliott Bay Book Company raised the question of moving the PNBA trade show from Portland to the Seattle region, an issue that has come before the board many times. "I'm very
disappointed in the choice of Portland, and the board needs to address this," she said. "There are five states in our association — why can’t we move to Seattle, which is more centrally located and easier to navigate?" Board president Sylla McClellan and Chambless explained, with some exasperation, that the show location had been addressed before and that the 1-5 corridor is financially better for booksellers because of the low rates on hotels and the trade show facility itself.

"Attendance fell in 2007 from 940 to 760 when we had the show in Spokane," Chambless declared. "The problem is the amount of exhibit space relative to the number of hotel rooms we book." Chambless has toured the area for competitive bids and found that exhibit space in Seattle is twice that of Portland. After much bantering back and forth the subject was dropped without a resolution.

Nancy Pearl, Ivan Doig, Bonny Becker, and Jonathan Evison were the featured authors at Friday morning’s breakfast. Becker, author of the Mouse and Bear picture books, told the audience that she’s been pleased to find that she’s literally putting words into the mouths of children. "I’m told that three-year-olds are now saying things like, ‘Insufferable,’ ‘impossible,’ and ‘begone!’" Becker said to much laughter. West of Here novelist Evison, who referred to his Algonquin editor Chuck Adams as "Dad," told the audience that his creative aim is to do for the Pacific Northwest what Steinbeck did for Central California. Although Nancy Pearl’s Book Lust To Go is a guide for travelers to recommended books about foreign destinations, the esteemed librarian surprised the audience by saying, "I’m not an enthusiastic traveler. Just leaving my house makes me anxious, so I’m totally the wrong person to write this book." She then redeemed herself by adding, "Still, I’m exactly the right person because I’ve been to all these places through the books I’ve read."

Ivan Doig, whose new book is Work Song (Riverhead), referred to his recurring character of Morrie Morgan when he said that the writer’s goal is "to write better than we know, to create characters readers love more than we ever hoped for." He concluded his talk by telling the rapt audience, "As writers we voyage on, knowing there is safe harbor in the hands of booksellers and booklovers."

The trade show floor was buzzing and active all day on Friday. At the Sasquatch booth, v-p of sales and marketing Sarah Hanson reported that their sales are up 20% over last year. "The show is really lively. The indies are fighting back, and showing great resilience," she said happily. "People are embracing local businesses, and I take pride in knowing that we in the bookselling community started the movement through IndieBound."

Plenty of potential sleepers and regional titles were being discussed by the booksellers on hand. Elliot Bay’s Booknotes editor Hilary Vonckx singled out Blind Your Ponies, by Stanley Gordon West (Algonquin); One Big Rain: Poems For Rainy Days, by Rita Gray and Ryan O’Rourke (Charlesbridge Pub.) for children 4 – 8; Oaxaca Al Gusto, by Diana Kennedy (U. of Texas Press); Pacific Feast: A Cook’s Guide to West Coast Foraging and Cuisine, by Jennifer Hahn (Mountaineers); The Lost Art of Reading, by David Ulin (Sasquatch); and The Etiquette of Freedom: Gary Snyder, Jim Harrison, and the Practice of the Wild, edited by Paul Ebenkamp (Counterpoint).

Powell’s Books’ Kathi Kirby is hopeful about Dogs, by Tim Flach (Abrams); Skippy Dies, by Paul Murray (FSG); Keith Richards: Life (Little Brown) and Workman’s The Photographic Card Deck of the Elements, by Theodore Gray. Edsel McFarlane’s New Car, by Max Holechek and Darrell Toland (Book Publishers Network) is a favorite of Judy Hobbs, children’s books buyer for Third Place Books in Seattle, in addition to The Three Little Kittens, by Jerry Pinkney (Dial); Dark Life, by Kat Falls (Scholastic); Adios, Nirvana, by Conrad Wesselhoft (Houghton Mifflin); and Bedtime for Bear, by Bonny Becker (Candlewick).

Author Jonathan Evison was glad for the "upbeat vibe" at the show and echoed the sentiments of many out-of-town attendees when he said, "Northwest booksellers never cease to inspire me with their passion, dedication, loyalty, and ability to endure the Portland Airport Holiday Inn. God love ‘em."

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Frankfurt Book Fair 2010: All Our Coverage...
You Know When the Men Are Gone by Siobhan Fallon

The crucial role of military wives becomes clear in Fallon’s powerful, resonant debut collection, where the women are linked by absence and a pervading fear that they’ll become war widows. more...
Ivan Doig digs up another story in Wild West

By ROB MERRILL, Associated Press Writer

"Work Song" (Riverhead Books, $25.95), by Ivan Doig: Readers who fell in love with Morrie Morris in "The Whistling Season" will welcome him back to Montana in Ivan Doig's latest adventure.

"Work Song" finds our hero — now a first-person narrator — taking on the name Morris Morgan and arriving in Butte during its post-World War I heyday and 10 years after the events in "The Whistling Season." He's drawn there by the copper mines that give the city its nickname — "the Richest Hill on Earth." "Downtown Butte, set into the slope of the Hill like the till in a cash register, was as busy as the streets could hold," writes Doig.

But Morgan's get-rich quick schemes are soon put on hold when he finds room and board in the home of a young widow with a meaningful name — Grace Faraday. It's there he meets two veteran miners from Wales named Wynford Griffith and Mayaard Hooper. Griff and Hoop, as they insist on being called, soon plug Morgan into the unionized world of mining.

The pages turn quickly after that, filled with characters Doig vividly describes. Like Samuel Sandison, the local librarian with a secret past who hires Morgan to take inventory and keep the books: "... the man frowning down at me had considerable girth at the waist and narrowed at the chest and shoulders; like the terrain around us, he sloped."

Or fleet-of-foot schoolboy Wladislaw, who is referred to — even by his teacher — by his nickname "Russian Famine": "Gaunt as an unfed greyhound, the hollow-cheeked boy did resemble a living ghost from starvation times on some distant steppe."

Doig's love of language — more specifically, storytelling — is apparent throughout the book. Morgan's job in the library surrounds him with masters of the craft, from Kipling to Shakespeare to Stevenson. And the book's plot centers on the "Work Song" of the title. Morgan volunteers to teach the miners' union enough about rhythm and meter so they can create one to foster solidarity as they square off with the Anaconda Copper Mining Co.

In the end, of course, "Work Song" — like "The Whistling Season" before it — is a love story. It's richly imagined and beautifully paced. And it's not hard to imagine it as a movie someday. Johnny Depp would make a fine Morgan and Nicole Kidman could wear Faraday's apron. But even if that never happens, readers could do much worse than losing themselves in Doig's words, none more poignant than these: "A goodbye to a good woman costs a piece of the soul."
Hey, Marsh, and please pass along to Laird--What can I say to you punsters except what they used to say around the British Admiralty: Lord, Nelson! The head of Riverhead publicity gives you his pun of the day award, no mean feat in NY book circles. Meanwhile Carol and I are sitting around fanning ourselves with Work Song raves from the AP, Bookpage.com and the Billings Gazette (biggest Montana paper), and my editor just emailed that the book broke into Amazon's top 500 (this apparently is really good?!?) and the book isn't even on sale until tomorrow.

So, we're perking, and about to get in the car to head for Camano and share all this with Linda Bierds and Sydney Kaplan. Looking forward to the next meal with you and Ann. And hey, Work Song turns out to be an OK title, huh?

All best, Ivan

p.s. Hours later: not sure I sent this earlier--me a culpa if you got this twice.

On Jun 28, 2010, at 9:03 AM, Nelson, Marshall wrote:

Did you know I came up with the title Work Song? See reference to miners and union folk songs in http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Work_song#cite_note-Lloyd1957-13 (but I was also thinking of Cannonball Adderly.)

Happy Birthday. We'll all have a G&T in your honor -- it's a 38-year tradition.

love,
DDAD

From: Laird Nelson [mailto:ljnelson@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, June 28, 2010 8:32 AM
To: Nelson, Marshall
Cc: carol doig; chb0095@aol.com
Subject: Re: Times Review

I would like to point out that I had nothing to do with this pun, though it does get high Marx from me. It was entirely my Fyodor's creation.

I am afraid that I have to leave you on that note; I have too much work to do and cannot afford to be Stalin.

Best,
Laird

On Mon, Jun 28, 2010 at 11:25 AM, Nelson, Marshall <MarshallNelson@dwt.com> wrote:

So do we now call you Ivan Fyodor Doigstoyevsky?

Marshall
Tel: (206) 757-8112
Book review: 'Work Song' by Ivan Doig | Dallas-Fort Worth Entertainment News and Events | News for Dallas, Texas | Dallas Morning News

In the early 1900s, the Montana city of Butte became a copper mining boomtown known as "the richest hill on earth." Immigrants from all over the world poured in to work the mines. They established distinct ethnic neighborhoods and patronized hundreds of saloons and an extensive red-light district.

Montana native Ivan Doig couldn't resist introducing one of the most colorful characters from his prior nine novels into this bustling, post-World War I setting. The spirited Work Song picks up the story of Morrie Morris, who first appeared as a well-educated man with a mysterious past in 2006's The Whistling Season.

Work Song begins with the classic stranger-comes-to-town setup, and Morrie Morris is stranger than most: a man with a prodigious moustache and an encyclopedic memory who delivers spontaneous lectures on Latin, art and literature. Morris, a former teacher (his occupation in Whistling Season), is an accountant by training, but he carries brass knuckles in his pocket and narrates the book in elevated diction that clashes with the coarse language of the miners. He relates his first impression of Butte:

"My train journey had brought me across the Montana everyone thinks of, mile upon hypnotic mile of rolling prairie with snowcapped peaks in the distance, and here, as sudden and surprising as a lost city of legendary times, was a metropolis of nowhere: nearly a hundred thousand people atop the earth's mineral crown, with nothing else around but the Rocky Mountains and the witnessing sky."

Morris arrives in Butte planning to hide out and evade some Chicago gangsters that are pursuing him for fixing a boxing match, but he ends up embroiled in a controversy between the Anaconda Copper Mining Co. and the miners' union. He takes the miners' side of the disagreement because the fetching widow, Grace Faraday, who runs the boarding house where he stays, is adamant in her disapproval of Anaconda, which she blames for the death of her husband. Readers' expectations about what happens when you mix a mysterious, yet chivalrous, single man with an attractive widow will not be disappointed.

Morris plans to find work as an accountant for Anaconda, but Grace and two elderly miners, who also room at the boarding house, persuade him not to. He first works as a "cryer" for a mortuary, a job that entails attending Irish wakes, setting up one of the most amusing episodes of the novel. "I do not normally partake,"

Morris tells an Irish miner who pours him a glass of whiskey at a wake. "Nobody else does it normal at a wake either," the miner replies. Work Song is filled with funny exchanges like this one, in which a pragmatic Butte resident misinterprets Morris' fancy talk.

After too many soused wakes, Morris finds a job at Butte's impressive library, which houses the private collection of a wealthy rancher with a notorious reputation. Morris' position in controlling the public meeting space at the library leads many of Butte's factions, including the miners' union, to seek his help.

One of the hazards of historical fiction is that it can feel like a presentation of research with some characters thrown in. Doig avoids this problem — apart from a few orienting conversations, most of the historical tidbits and Butte trivia Doig shares arise directly out of the action. Work Song succeeds in bringing its setting to life. The plot takes a few improbable turns, including the episode that gives rise to the novel's title, but wherever Work Song meanders, Doig, a consummate entertainer, always shows the reader a good time.

Jenny Shank is the books and writers editor of NewWest.Net. Her first novel, The Ringer, will be published by The Permanent Press in May 2011.

books@dallasnews.com

Work Song

Ivan Doig

(Riverhead Books, $25.95)
And #13 on the Indie HC fiction list overall

From: Nelson, Christopher ( PGI )  
Sent: Thursday, July 22, 2010 2:01 PM 
To: Stark, Kate; Davis, Kathryn; Einhorn, Amy; Held, Ivan; Kloske, Geoffrey; Malonzo, Michelle; Melnitsky, Halli B; Minnich, Sara; Morrissey, Jake; Nyren, Neil; Perciasepe, Laura; Saleton, Rebecca; Sorensen, Stephanie  
Subject: FW: The Indie Bestseller List for the week ending Sunday, July 18, 2010

-----Original Message-----
From: Pete Reynolds- Indie Bestseller List [mailto:peter@bookweb.org]  
Sent: Thursday, July 22, 2010 11:55 AM  
To: Nelson, Christopher ( PGI ); Tanusukma, Peggy  
Subject: The Indie Bestseller List for the week ending Sunday, July 18, 2010

You are receiving this email from American Booksellers Association because you have requested to receive the weekly Indie Bestseller List. Should you unsubscribe to this email you will no longer receive any emails from ABA and may miss out on member-only benefits and important news. To change your email preference or to update your email address or other contact information, please click here: Update Profile/Email Address.

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The Indie Bestseller List
Published Thursday, July 22, 2010 (for the sales week ended Sunday, July 18, 2010). Based on reporting from many hundreds of independent bookstores across the United States. For information on more titles, please visit IndieBound.org

Booksellers: The Indie Bestseller List may be downloaded as a color PDF for display in your store. Go to the Indie Bestseller page under the IndieBound section on BookWeb.org, or click on the bestseller link in Thursday's Bookselling This Week email.

Debuts for the week:

**Hardcover Fiction**

#3-Faithful Place, by Tana French (9780670021871)
#6-Fly Away Home, by Jennifer Weiner (9780743204270)
#7-The Glass Rainbow, by James Lee Burke (9781439128299)
#11-The Cookbook Collector, by Allegra Goodman (9780385340854)
#14-Corduroy Mansions, by Alexander McCall Smith (9780307379085)

**Hardcover Nonfiction**

#10-The Obama Diaries, by Laura Ingraham (9781439197516)
#15-Scout, Atticus, and Boo, by Mary Murphy (9780061924071)
History holds a world of intrigue for acclaimed author Ivan Doig, but that doesn’t mean he wants to pack up and move back in time for the rest of his natural life.

Still, Doig says, he wouldn’t mind sneaking a peek for short periods to witness events like he writes about in his new novel, Work Song, which recreates the popular character of Morrie Morris—who was last seen making a dramatic exit from a one-room Montana schoolhouse in the final pages of a previous novel, The Whistling Season.

The new tome finds Morrie back in the state a decade later in 1919, ready to seek his fortune in Butte, then the copper mining capital of the world. But, as is to be expected with any novel that needs a captivating plot to keep readers turning the pages, he runs into a few problems along the way.

For those who aren’t aware of Morrie’s character traits, it must be said that sometimes the former schoolteacher and wrestling manager—who spent time in the previous novel pretending his girlfriend was his sister—is a smidgen too smart for his own good. In this case, his brains first land him a job at the surprisingly opulent Butte Library and then cause mining union leaders to seek him out for help on a variety of fronts.

Among the other characters Morrie meets along the way—a lovely widow named
Grace, an eclectic duo of retired Welsh miners, a former student from his schoolhouse days and hulking thugs are among them—the true aggressor in the book isn’t even a person, but Anaconda, the longtime mining company that seemed in many ways to be (at least when it was operating in the early 1900s) evil incarnate.

“Anaconda, back in that period, was almost a stage villain in the way the company treated the miners, and Butte itself,” Doig says. “It had such a cast of characters: A leading financier from Standard Oil was involved, the company goons were involved. The Montana National Guard occupied Butte at the bidding of the mine owners six times in six years during the strike agitations in 1914-1920. It was like what Theodore Roosevelt, not all that much earlier, had called ‘malefactors of great wealth.’”

For further proof of Anaconda’s many transgressions, Doig points to the 1917 Speculator Disaster—which killed 168 men and injured many others—and, that same year, the lynching of labor leader Frank Little, who was hung from a railroad trestle a month after arriving in Butte and was found with a note pinned to his chest that read “First and last warning.”

Because of Doig’s canny ability to merge historical facts with sublime storytelling, Work Song doesn’t feel like proselytizing, but instead storytelling that manages to educate readers along the way. You’ll probably learn a lot about what was going on in the copper mines of Butte more than 90 years ago, but you’ll also get caught up in the stories of Morrie, the miners and the rest of the people who populate the tale.

When asked if readers will see Morrie again, the author says chances are good.

“Like Morrie, I never say never,” Doig says. “He’s become part of the way I can work with the language. And he’s always working on new ideas, as am I.”
Matthew, hi--responses for the NYTBR stray questions

--I'm not qualified to crystal-ball any future of the Western, which as far as I know dimmed away when Louis L'Amour and John Wayne and other shoot' em-up guys with big belt buckles and stomachs to match went off into the sunset, long since. If you were to ask me about the future of America's literature that derives from writers bringing the heart and soul of their home territory onto the page--as Faulkner did, as Cather did, as Updike did, as countless others have--I'd say--say it looks strong and promising, and I intend to keep giving it my best. The magnificent Eudora Welty (and I relish the thought of how she would have responded if asked about the future of the Southern) said the creed for us: "The art that speaks most clearly, explicitly, directly, and passionately from its place of origin, will remain the longest understood."

--The next novel will be about a bachelor saloonkeeper, "the best bartender who ever lived," and the incurably curious son he's raising alone, set in mid-twentieth century.

--My writing day begins about 6:30 AM, and goes on through the morning; if I've met my days' word quota, I will do some research or rewriting in the afternoon. I'm a more natural editor and rewriter than I am a first drifter; I seem to be a rare writer in actually liking to revise a manuscript. But the main point of the workday, the heavy lifting, has to be to create those words of the quota, the imagination talking onto the page.

--The Good Soldiers, by David Finkel, is a powerful book about what U.S. troops--and thus, us--faced in the Iraq quagmire. The Lighthouse Stevensons, by Bella Bathurst, is a great job of something really hard to do, the joint biography. For fiction, I do a lot or re-reading, and an everlasting favorite is The Commitments, Roddy Doyle's irrepressible tale of a Dublin wannabe band attempting to unloose soul music into Ireland; very dirty-mouthed, very funny, very wonderful.

On Jul 8, 2010, at 7:33 AM, Venzon, Matthew wrote:

Sunday's NYTBR hasn't arrived yet, Ivan. Hopefully we'll get our copy tomorrow.

On that note, the Book Review has been sprucing up its online presence, and often likes to include supplementary material to the print edition there. An editor there got in touch last night in hopes that you could answer just a few questions for their Stray Questions section:

-What do you see as the future of the Western?
-What are you working on now?
-Describe a typical day in your writing life.
-What have you been reading or recommending lately?

You can see some previous examples here: http://papercutsblogs.nytimes.com/tag/stray-questions/
No walk in the park

Hoping to gain perspective on his troubled marriage, the deaths of friends, and the vagaries of male middle age, Lynn Schooler (author of The Blue Bear) embarks on a walkabout along one of the wildest stretches of coastline in Southeast Alaska. What starts as a journey of introspection turns into a grueling march — through pelting rain, thick brush and knee-busting boulder fields — that climaxes in a protracted face-off with a rogue bear and the terrifying crossing of a meltwater torrent. Just getting to this trail-less wilderness in Glacier Bay National Park tests Schooler’s perseverance; waves pound his small vessel, and notorious boot-eating currents threaten his entry into Lituya Bay.

Choice bits of Southeast Alaska history complement Schooler’s adventures: tales of castaways and frontier justice, explorers and hermit settlers, earthquakes and monstrous tsunamis and the recently discovered 500-year-old body of a hunter encased in ice. Deftly interweaving personal and natural disaster with nature observation, Schooler never succumbs to self-pity or self-aggrandizement.

In one of the book’s key scenes, he gets caught up in the northward migration of thousands of shorebirds, which move “like a boneless creature or a gossamer curtain blowing loose on the wind.” Acknowledging that nature can be “medieval” in its disregard for individual human and animal lives, he ultimately finds consolation in community and in acceptance of life’s overriding agenda — the continuity of species. “What matters is the effect we have on those around us and those who come after us.” Simply the fact of our existence declares us winners in evolution’s gamble, the heirs of ancestors who survived long enough to procreate.

And the best tool for human survival, Schooler shows, is simply our brain, our inventiveness.

A beautifully paced, compassionate and understated memoir, Walking Home will please fans of Seth Kantner and Richard Nelson. If the book has one shortcoming, it lies in its portrayal of Schooler’s wife, who remains a blur — as if Schooler still ached too much at the time of writing to closely scrutinize one of the reasons he set out on this adventure in the first place.

BY MICHAEL ENGELHARD

‘The music of men’s lives’

“My train journey had brought me across the Montana everyone thinks of, mile upon hypnotic mile of rolling prairie with snowcapped peaks in the distance, and here, as sudden and surprising as a lost city of legendary times, was a metropolis of nowhere....”

In his latest work of historical fiction, Ivan Doig focuses on itinerant teacher Morrie Morris, a charming character who appeared in his earlier novel, The Whistling Season.

Morrie steps off the train in post-WWI Butte, Mont., the copper-mining capital of the world, hoping to make a living as a bookkeeper for the Anaconda Company. He takes a room at a boarding house but soon finds that the “richest hill on earth” is as politically unstable as it is physically dangerous. Quickly abandoning the notion of working for The Man, he becomes entangled with the union instead. Soon he’s working at the public library under the supervision of a gruff former cattleman who goes by the moniker Earl of Hell.

With tensions between the company goons and rabble-rousing Wobbly agitators spiraling out of control, the union desperately needs to boost the morale of its 10,000 or so miners. The tale unfolds like a classic David-and-Goliath confrontation, describing how a fractured community slowly comes together.

The plot keeps the book humming along, but it’s Doig’s masterful prose that makes it memorable. Here’s his description of a fidgety boy nicknamed Russian Famine: “Skinny as the sticks of kindling in the woodbox ... in dusty patched pants and a hand-me-down shirt,” he zips around the city “gaunt as an unfed greyhound.” The mass of Wobblies and their foes are sometimes sadly one-dimensional, but the individual characters live and breathe.

Doig’s prose is old-fashioned, almost Dickensian, and it gives the book a big heart. His world stands like a well-built wooden table, sturdy and beautiful, without need of ornamentation. From the onset the reader feels convinced that nothing too terrible will happen, and yet the lack of mayhem does not cause the story to lose its shine. History buffs, lovers of fine prose, and anyone after a solid and finely crafted story will enjoy this novel.

BY KATHLEEN YALE
Work Song
By Ivan Doig
Published June 2010 by Riverhead Books, New York, NY
$25.95 hardcover

"There are moments in a lifetime when you can taste history as it is happening," says Morrie Morgan, the captivating narrator of Work Song. "So it was, at the start of the intense summer of 1919, as the miners of Butte and the mining corporation cooked up strategies against each other. Dickens should have been living in this hour to tell the tale ..."

Instead, he seems to have delegated that task to one of this era’s master storytellers, Ivan Doig. The Montana-born and raised author has reawakened Morgan, a scene-stealer in his last book, The Whistling Season, and planted him in Butte during one of that city’s most tempestuous times, when the “richest hill on Earth” was rife with labor strife.

Morgan possesses “the damnedest brainbox ever created,” according to his employer at the Butte Public Library, the irascible Samuel Sandison. He puts it to use helping his pals in the labor movement outsmart the Anaconda Company, while courting his landlady, performing all sorts of tasks at the well-stocked library, and helping a fleet-footed street kid nicknamed Russian Famine find suitable employment.

As usual, there's no dearth of quirky characters in Doig's retinue, from the pair of retired Welsh miners who keep company at the boarding house, to the two goons who are convinced he's a no-good labor organizer, hired by the dreaded Wobblies to rabble-rouse in their fair city.

Splendid on a Large Scale The Writings of Hans Peter Gylenburg Koch, Montana Territory, 1869-1874
Edited by Kim Allen Scott and designed by Peter Rutledge Koch
Published by Drumllummon Institute and Bedrock Editions, Helena, MT
$19.95 softcover or $60 hardcover

"Montana is a queer country," wrote Peter Koch to his bride-to-be, Laurentze, in June 1873. "All night it has been snowing hard and the thermometer has been within one degree of the freezing point. Now however the sun is coming out warm and the moisture rising from the ground in a perfect cloud of steam."

Koch, a university-educated Dane, reports on the weather, landscape and
Best of the Northwest

Zero History: A Novel
William Gibson
The highly anticipated new novel from the iconic visionary and author of the national bestsellers Spook Country and Pattern Recognition.
$26.95 Putnam

Blind Your Ponies: A Novel
Stanley Gordon West
Sam Pickett never expected to settle in Willow Creek. He also never imagined that the luckless high school basketball team he is assigned to coach could restore his broken heart and the spirit of this small Montana town.
$14.95 Algonquin Books

The Wilding: A Novel
Benjamin Percy
A powerful first novel set in a threatened Western landscape from the award-winning author of Refresh, Refresh. "[An] excellent debut novel.... It's as close as you can get to a contemporary Deliverance."—Publishers Weekly, starred review
$23.00 Graywolf Press

A Flickering Light
Jane Kirkpatrick
A novel
$13.99

An Absence So Great
Jane Kirkpatrick
A novel
$14.99

Work Song: A Novel
Ivan Doig
An award-winning and beloved novelist of the American West spins the further adventures of a favorite character in one of his richest historical settings yet.
$25.95 Riverhead
Holding strong at #5 PNBA.

-----Original Message-----
From: Peter Reynolds [mailto:peter@bookweb.org]
Sent: Wednesday, December 08, 2010 12:56 PM
To: Nelson, Christopher (PGI)
Subject: Eight Regional Indie Bestseller Lists for w/e December 5, 2010

Eight Regional Indie Bestseller Lists for the sales week ended Sunday, December 5, 2010 may be accessed by clicking on the links below.

Thanks,
Pete

New England Independent Booksellers Association (NEIBA):

http://www.bookweb.org/files/open/docs/indiebound/regional/101208ne.txt

Southern Independent Booksellers Alliance (SIBA):

http://www.bookweb.org/files/open/docs/indiebound/regional/101208si.txt

Mountains & Plains Independent Booksellers Association (MPIBA):

http://www.bookweb.org/files/open/docs/indiebound/regional/101208mp.txt

Pacific Northwest Booksellers Association (PNBA):

http://www.bookweb.org/files/open/docs/indiebound/regional/121008pn.txt
Hey, Ivan, also just wanted to write and say, vis a vis concluding a very successful (and no doubt exhausting) tour, "Welcome back." And also vis a vis more Morrie (now that Liz and I have concluded our business), "Welcome back!" I am missing seeing you in the flesh but utterly enjoying every vicarious moment.

As ever,
Becky

From: carol doig [mailto:ccdooig@comcast.net]
Sent: Tuesday, August 03, 2010 4:38 PM
To: Saletan, Rebecca
Cc: Liz Darhansoff
Subject: Re: The Indie Bestseller List for week ending August 1, 2010

Becky, hi--Thanks for the good word about the Indie list. Don't think I told you I did a gig a week ago on behalf of our old days, crowd of 150 at Third Place who'd read Whistling Season in their book groups. They definitely wanted more Morrie.

Best--Ivan

On Aug 3, 2010, at 12:13 PM, Saletan, Rebecca wrote:

Work Song hangs in there at #15!

From: Nelson, Christopher ( PGI )
Sent: Tuesday, August 03, 2010 1:44 PM
To: Stark, Kate; Davis, Kathryn; Einhorn, Amy; Held, Ivan; Kloske, Geoffrey; Malonzo, Michelle; Melnitsky, Halli B; Minnich, Sara; Morrissey, Jake; Nyren, Neil; Perciasepe, Laura; Saletan, Rebecca; Sorensen, Stephanie
Subject: FW: The Indie Bestseller List for week ending August 1, 2010
From: "Saletan, Rebecca" <Rebecca.Saletan@us.penguin.com>
Subject: FW: Eight Regional Indie Bestseller Lists for w/e August 1, 2010
Date: August 4, 2010 2:20:31 PM PDT
To: carol doig <cddoig@comcast.net>, Liz Darhansoff <liz@dvliterary.com>

#3 Pacific Northwest
#5 Mountains and Plains

From: Nelson, Christopher (PGI)
Sent: Wednesday, August 04, 2010 2:02 PM
To: Stark, Kate; Davis, Kathryn; Einhorn, Amy; Held, Ivan; Kloske, Geoffrey; Malonzo, Michelle; Melnitsky, Halli B; Minnich, Sara; Morrissey, Jake; Nyren, Neil; Perciasape, Laura; Saletan, Rebecca; Sorensen, Stephanie
Subject: FW: Eight Regional Indie Bestseller Lists for w/e August 1, 2010

-----Original Message-----
From: Peter Reynolds [mailto:peter@bookweb.org]
Sent: Wednesday, August 04, 2010 12:41 PM
To: Nelson, Christopher (PGI)
Subject: Eight Regional Indie Bestseller Lists for w/e August 1, 2010

Eight Regional Indie Bestseller Lists for the sales week ended Sunday, August 1, 2010 may be accessed by clicking on the links below.
Thanks,
Pete

New England Independent Booksellers Association (NEIBA):

http://www.bookweb.org/files/open/docs/indiebound/regional/100804ne.txt

Southern Independent Booksellers Alliance (SIBA):

http://www.bookweb.org/files/open/docs/indiebound/regional/100804si.txt

Mountains & Plains Independent Booksellers Association (MPIBA):
#3 in the Pacific Northwest, #7 Mountains and Plains

-----Original Message-----

From: Peter Reynolds [mailto:peter@bookweb.org]
Sent: Wednesday, August 11, 2010 12:16 PM
To: Nelson, Christopher (PGI)
Subject: Eight Regional Indie Bestseller Lists for w/e August 8, 2010

Eight Regional Indie Bestseller Lists for the sales week ended Sunday, August 8, 2010 may be accessed by clicking on the links below.

Thanks,
Pete

New England Independent Booksellers Association (NEIBA):

http://www.bookweb.org/files/open/docs/indiebound/regional/100811ne.txt

Southern Independent Booksellers Alliance (SIBA):

http://www.bookweb.org/files/open/docs/indiebound/regional/100811si.txt

Mountains & Plains Independent Booksellers Association (MPIBA):

http://www.bookweb.org/files/open/docs/indiebound/regional/100811mp.txt

Pacific Northwest Booksellers Association (PNBA):

http://www.bookweb.org/files/open/docs/indiebound/regional/100811pn.txt
From: carol doig <cddoig@comcast.net>
Subject: Re: zammo tour finale
Date: July 30, 2010 1:01:19 PM PDT
To: "Venzon, Matthew" <Matthew.Venzon@us.penguingroup.com>

OK on the Rege interview, 10 AM PST on the 5th. No on the Tacoma request, you're right that they can try us again on the paperback, and they ought to do it in plenty of time and plan it with sufficient oomph, so that we can do really well there in a sizable market I seldom get to.

Happy weekend and best--Ivan

On Jul 30, 2010, at 9:21 AM, Venzon, Matthew wrote:

This is all so terrific, Ivan. And we appreciate your thorough reports throughout the tour -- it's always helpful for us to know what works and what doesn't.

A few odds and ends:

You'll recall that Rege Behe of the Pittsburgh Tribune Review had wanted to set up an interview a few weeks ago, but got assigned to a major piece by his editor that prevented him from doing the interview. He's now back to a more normal routine at the Arts desk, and has read and enjoyed WORK SONG. He was wondering if it might be possible to arrange a phone interview next Thursday, 8/5, sometime between 7 AM and 1 PM Pacific Time? It's a little late, I know, but Rege is a great interviewer and has talked to many Riverhead authors over the years, so I'd like to set this up if you're able.

Looking further ahead, David Domkoski at the Tacoma Public Library got in touch through Stasha Brandon at University Books. He was wondering if you might be willing to do a WORK SONG event in November, or possibly slightly earlier. I explained to him that the date is a bit further outside the publication than we'd prefer, and tried to steer him toward an event tied to the paperback publication. But it sounds like summer events work best for them. It's entirely up to you, of course, and if you'd prefer not to do it, that's fine with us. I just wanted to present the offer.

Thanks,
Matthew

-----Original Message-----
From: carol doig [mailto:cddoig@comcast.net]
Sent: Friday, July 30, 2010 11:08 AM
To: Barson, Michael S
Cc: Venzon, Matthew; Plata, Glory; Saletan, Rebecca; Liz Darhansoff
Subject: zammo tour finale
Good Friday morning, all--

The tour finale last night. As Carol and I were strolling up to the Parkplace bookstore well ahead of time, we met the owners, Rebecca and Mary, scrounging chairs from the mall plaza. They'd set up 98 chairs in the store and those were already filled; they lugged in 25 more from the plaza, wheeled in their office desk chairs and everything else, and still ended up with 50 people standing in nooks and crannies, for a total crowd of 180. A really big signing line afterward, the store on the brink of running out of Work Songs until Carol and I provided a dozen of our own we'd providentially brought. All in all, a roaring success for an indie that has been struggling but stays on its feet.

This was the fifth SRO of the tour.

And it's time to tip the hat in the direction of the Riverhead Way of Publicity; many thanks, Michael, Matthew, and Glory, for all your good works.

Best,

Ivan
Hi, Becky--The B&N thing looked pretty good, didn't it, authorial physiognomy notwithstanding. FYI, the other two recommended books are somewhat ambitious reads, but The All of It is a really nifty short weekend entertainer, quite a marvel of writing, I think. Jeannette Hain's later novel, Matters of Chance, is so different, so much thicker in every way, that it makes you wonder where The All of It came from. Anyway, thanks for the kind words, but I had pretty good stuff to work with.

Another topic: can you provide me Tim Egan's email address? The Big Burn won a Washington State Book Award, and I'd like to make nice with a congratulatory message.

Other than that, life goes on, in the Medicine Lodge saloon of my head. Hope all is well with you, and the educating of teenagers.

All best--Ivan

On Sep 14, 2010, at 8:13 AM, Saletan, Rebecca wrote:

Nice job on this, Ivan. More books for the nightstand!

---

From: Hirt, Lydia
Sent: Tuesday, September 14, 2010 11:00 AM
To: Stark, Kate; Deykerhoff, Paul; Saletan, Rebecca; Nelson, Christopher (PGI); Trevorrow, Elaine
Cc: Kileen, Jared
Subject: Ivan Doig on BN.com

B&N requested to feature Ivan Doig on their Guest Books feature, which recently went live and you can read it here. B&N's introduction to Ivan focuses on WORK SONG and has a link to the buy-the-book page. Please let me know if you have any questions.
From: "Hirt, Lydia" <Lydia.Hirt@us.penguin.com>
Subject: Your Guest Books feature on B&N.com
Date: September 14, 2010 8:02:05 AM PDT
To: carol doig <cddoig@comcast.net>

Good Morning, Ivan:

The Guest Books feature you completed at the request of Barnes & Noble is now live and you can read it [here](#). B&N wrote a very thoughtful introduction of you which included wonderful mentions of WORK SONG.

Thank you for your participation and please let me know if you have any questions.

:: Lydia Hirt :: Assistant Marketing Manager:: G.P. Putnam's Sons / Riverhead ::
:: 375 Hudson Street NY, NY 10014 :: 212.366.2426 ::

Connect with us online:
www.twitter.com/PutnamBooks & www.facebook.com/PutnamBooks
Becky, hi--

Glad to see Work.Song is still doing well with the regional indies. The PNBA breakfast gig should help it along toward a holidays with booksellers out here, and the speaking engagement at Montana State U. in Bozeman in mid-Oct. includes a booksigning at the marvelous Country Bookshelf, which should sell a lot of copies. Meanwhile, the writing life goes on here. Carol has just read 130 pp. of Miss You When I'm Gone and exuberantly wants more, more. I need to add a couple more sizable scenes onto that for the plot's sake, so it'll be into the fall before I pass you a sizable chunk of ms to you. Anyway, so far so good it seems. Happy Labor Day weekend--we're staying home and eating out of the garden.

Best,

Ivan

On Aug 30, 2010, at 12:45 PM, Saletan, Rebecca wrote:

#3 Pacific Northwest, #14 Mountains and Plains.

-----Original Message-----
From: Peter Reynolds [mailto:peter@bookweb.org]
Sent: Wednesday, August 25, 2010 12:41 PM
To: Nelson, Christopher ( PGI )
Subject: Eight Regional Indie Bestseller Lists for w/e August 22, 2010

Eight Regional Indie Bestseller Lists for the sales week ended Sunday, August 22, 2010 may be accessed by clicking on the links below.
Thanks, Pete

New England Independent Booksellers Association (NEIBA):
#4 Pacific Northwest, #5 Mountains and Plains ...

-----Original Message-----
From: Peter Reynolds [mailto:peter@bookweb.org]
Sent: Wednesday, August 18, 2010 12:21 PM
To: Nelson, Christopher (PGI)
Subject: Eight Regional Indie Bestseller Lists for w/e August 15, 2010

Eight Regional Indie Bestseller Lists for the sales week ended Sunday, August 15, 2010 may be accessed by clicking on the links below.

Thanks,

Pete

New England Independent Booksellers Association (NEIBA):

http://www.bookweb.org/files/open/docs/indiebound/regional/100818ne.txt

Southern Independent Booksellers Alliance (SIBA):

http://www.bookweb.org/files/open/docs/indiebound/regional/100818si.txt

Mountains & Plains Independent Booksellers Association (MPIBA):

http://www.bookweb.org/files/open/docs/indiebound/regional/100818mp.txt
Back on the PNBA list at #11

-----Original Message-----
From: Peter Reynolds [mailto:peter@bookweb.org]
Sent: Wednesday, November 24, 2010 11:36 AM
To: Nelson, Christopher ( PGI )
Subject: Eight Regional Indie Bestseller Lists for w/e November 21, 2010

Eight Regional Indie Bestseller Lists for the sales week ended Sunday, November 21, 2010 may be accessed by clicking on the links below.
Thanks,
Pete

New England Independent Booksellers Association (NEIBA):

http://www.bookweb.org/files/open/docs/indiebound/regional/101124ne.txt

Southern Independent Booksellers Alliance (SIBA):

http://www.bookweb.org/files/open/docs/indiebound/regional/101124si.txt

Mountains & Plains Independent Booksellers Association (MPIBA):
no surprise to me! Hallelujah!! xLD

On Mon, Nov 29, 2010 at 10:34 AM, Saletan, Rebecca <Rebecca.Saletan@us.penguin.com> wrote:

So you can break your own previous record, Ivan?

From: Walker, Alan
Sent: Monday, November 29, 2010 10:30 AM
To: Saletan, Rebecca; Kloske, Geoffrey
Subject: FW: Lakotas and the Black Hills nominated for PNBA Award

Becky, Geoff, see below re: Work Song!

Awards: PNBA Shortlist

The shortlist for the Pacific Northwest Booksellers Association's 2011 Book Awards, selected by PNBA bookseller members, consists of the following 19 titles:

The Atlas of Love by Laurie Frankel (St. Martin's)
The Clearing by Heather Davis (Graphia Books/Houghton Mifflin Harcourt)
A Common Pornography: A Memoir by Kevin Sampsell (Harper Perennial)
The Fences Between Us by Kirby Larson (Scholastic Press)
Footnotes in Gaza by Joe Sacco (Metropolitan Books)
Heartbroke Bay: A Novel by Lynn D'Urso (Berkley)
Hold Me Closer, Necromancer by Lish McBride (Holt)
The Lakotas and the Black Hills: The Struggle for Sacred Ground by Jeffrey Ostler (Viking)
Lean on Pete by Willy Vlautin (Harper Perennial)
Mariposa Road: The First Butterfly Big Year by Robert Michael Pyle (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt)
Matterhorn: A Novel of the Vietnam War by Karl Marlantes (Atlantic Monthly)
Memory Wall by Anthony Doerr (Scribner)
Nashville Chrome by Rick Bass (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt)
River House: A Memoir by Sarahlee Lawrence (Tin House Books)
Shell Games: Rogues, Smugglers, and the Hunt for Nature's Bounty by Craig Welch (Morrow)
Test Ride on the Sunnyland Bus: A Daughter's Civil Rights Journey by Ana Maria Spagna (University of Nebraska Press)
What We Are: A Novel by Peter Nathaniel Malae (Grove Press)
Work Song by Ivan Doig (Riverhead)

The winners of the awards will be announced in January.

--

Liz Darhansoff
Darhansoff, Verrill, Feldman
236 West 26th Street, #802
New York, NY 10001
(917) 305-8946
liz@dvfliterary.com
www.dvfliterary.com
Ivan Doig mixes Morrie, Montana, music in smooth novel


In his new book, Seattle novelist Ivan Doig delivers a concentrated dose of the learned and genial Morrie Morgan, whom readers first met in the 2006 crowd-pleaser, "The Whistling Season," where Morrie found himself teaching in a small Montana schoolhouse.

"Work Song" is more Morrie's tale this time as protagonist and narrator of a story set in 1919 Butte, Mont., where he has come with hopes of earning a few bucks from the copper mine with his bookkeeping skills.

But on his first night in the boardinghouse of the comely widow Grace Faraday, he learns that the mining corporation, Anaconda, holds the entire town in its clutches.

Corporate bigwigs turn a blind eye to the dangers faced by the mineworkers and repeatedly fight their every attempt to unionize.

Residents therefore regard outsiders with suspicion, so Morrie sides with the working folk rather than seek work with Anaconda. He ends up stumbling into a job at the local library.

Gruff, impatient and disinclined to suffer fools, librarian Samuel Sandison recognizes in Morrie a keen and literate intellect and he makes him his right-hand man. The job provides a steady income, but money is far from his only worry.

Tensions between Anaconda and its laborers are heating up, and soon Morrie becomes the key to strengthening the bond among the miners, whose varied nationalities create riffs that weaken their cause.

Always the thinker, Morrie decides music will give the workers the oomph to stand up to new pressures from the brass. But it's harder than you'd think to organize the composing and selection of the "work song" that they hope will fuel them like Popeye's spinach.

Thin fiber for a plot? Inarguably. One of the throwback qualities of "Work Song" is how its texture puts one in mind of an old "let's-put-on-a-show" musical. That feels a bit at odds with a novel starring a character who reads classics in Latin, though this is hardly a strange idea. The trick is to stop expecting great depth and just revel in Mr. Doig's joyride through American sports and labor history by way of his winsome characters and a breezy tale.

He infuses "Work Song" with knowing passages about the tragedy-flecked mining
industry. He tosses in baseball and prizefighting, drawing a slick parallel between the famous "Black Sox" scandal of the 1919 World Series and something much closer to home where Morrie is concerned.

What I really love about Doig's writing is Doig's writing. You won't find a lazy sentence in 275 pages of story, where words often manage to simultaneously inform, entertain and surprise.

In an early passage, Doig uses Morrie's reading of a newspaper's headlines to quickly contextualize the times.

"The front page could barely hold all the calamitous items there were to post," Morrie tells us.

"'ATTY GENERAL WARNS OF DOMESTIC BOLSHEVIKS' ... 'BUTTE BREWERY SHUTTERED BY DRY LAW' ... America, in that agitated time; not merely a nation, but something like a continental nervous condition."

Like his hero, Mr. Doig turns out to be not merely an aficionado of history, but a friendly teacher who genuinely wishes to infect his students with a love of books and learning. Yes, "Work Song" is more entertainment than art.

But it will make you feel smart -- maybe even a little smug -- when you take it to the beach.

Karen Sandstrom is the former book editor of the Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Looking for more from the Post-Gazette? Join PG+, our members-only web site. You'll get exclusive sports content, opinion, financial information, discounts from retailers and restaurants, and more. Our introduction to PG+ gives you all the details.

First published on July 25, 2010 at 12:00 am

Excerpted from Ivan Doig mixes Morrie, Montana, music in smooth novel

READABILITY — An Arc90 Laboratory Experiment
http://lab.arc90.com/experiments/readability
Doig works more mastery

By Rob Merrill
Associated Press

Readers who fell in love with Morrie Morris in "The Whistling Season" will welcome him back to Montana in Ivan Doig's latest adventure.

"Work Song" finds our hero - now a first-person narrator - taking on the name Morris Morgan and arriving in Butte during its post-World War I heyday and 10 years after the events of "The Whistling Season."

He's drawn there by the copper mines that give the city its nickname - "the Richest Hill on Earth."

"Downtown Butte, set into the slope of the Hill like a till in a cash register, was as busy as the streets could hold," writes the Montana-born Doig, who now lives in Seattle.

But Morgan's get-rich quick schemes are soon put on hold when he finds room and board in the home of a young widow with a meaningful name: Grace Faraday.

It's there he meets two veteran miners from Wales named Wynford Griffith and Maynard Hooper. Griffith and Hoop, as they insist on being called, soon plug Morgan into the unionized world of mining.

The pages turn quickly after that, filled with characters Doig vividly describes. Like Samuel Sandison, the local librarian with a secret past who hires Morgan to take inventory and keep the books:

"... the man frowning down at me had considerable girth at the waist and narrowed at the chest and shoulders; like the terrain around us, he sloped."

Or fleet-of-foot schoolboy Wladislaw, who is referred to - even by his teacher - by his nickname "Russian Famine":

"Gaunt as an unfed greyhound, the hollow-cheeked boy did resemble a living ghost from starvation times on some distant steppe."

Doig's love of language - more specifically, storytelling - is apparent throughout the book.

Morgan's job in the library surrounds him with masters of the craft, from Kipling to Shakespeare to Stevenson. And the book's plot centers on the "Work Song" of the title.

Morgan volunteers to teach the miners' union enough about rhythm and meter so they can create one to foster solidarity as they square off with the Anaconda Copper Mining Co.

In the end, of course, "Work Song" - like "The Whistling Season" before it - is a love story. It's richly imagined and beautifully paced.

It's not hard to imagine it as a movie someday. Johnny Depp would make a fine Morgan and Nicole Kidman could wear Faraday's apron.

But even if that never happens, readers could do much worse than losing themselves in Doig's words, none more poignant than these: "A goodbye to a good woman costs a piece of the soul."

BOOK REVIEW
"Work Song," by Ivan Doig (Riverhead Books, 288 pages, $25.95)

Best-selling books
From Publishers Weekly

Fiction
1. "Sizzling Sixteen," Janet Evanovich (St. Martin's, $27.99)
2. "The Girl Who Kicked the Hornet's Nest," Stieg Larsson (Knopf, $27.95)
4. "The Lion," Nelson DeMille (Grand Central, $27.99)
5. "Family Ties," Danielle Steel (Delacorte, $28)
6. "The Help," Kathryn Stockett (Putnam/Amy Einhorn, $24.95)
7. "The Passage," Justin Cronin (Ballantine, $27)
8. "Whiplash," Catherine Coulter (Putnam, $26.95)
9. "Frankenstein: Lost Souls," Dean Koontz (Bantam, $27)
10. "Dead in the Family," Charline Harris (Ace, $25.95)

Nonfiction
3. "Women Food and God," Geneen Roth (Scribner, $24)
4. "The Big Short," Michael Lewis (Norton, $27.95)

AMERICAN LIFE IN POETRY
By Ted Kooser
U.S. Poet Laureate, 2004-2006

Alicia Suskin Ostriker is one of our country's finest poets. She lives in

1. "Implied by your up-ended skirt"
To be blessed said the dog
is to have a pinch of God
Fiction and poetry

A wide variety of works includes stories by experienced hands such as Stephen King and Walter Mosley, poems by Elizabeth Alexander and Fannie Flagg’s former Southern beauty queen trying new paths.

Crave Radiance
New and Selected Poems 1990-2010
Elizabeth Alexander
Graywolf Press, $28
This collection showcases the poet who read at Barack Obama’s inauguration and includes that poem, “Praise Song for the Day.”

Full Dark, No Stars
Stephen King
Scribner, $27.99
King’s latest story collection includes a cancer patient’s deal with the devil and a secret at the center of a happy marriage.

I Still Dream About You
A Novel
Fannie Flagg
Random House, $36
A onetime Southern beauty queen-turned-real estate agent has drastic plans that keep getting thwarted.

The Last Days of Ptolemy Grey
A Novel
Walter Mosley
Riverhead, $25.95
A 91-year-old in South Central L.A. agrees to a dangerous drug experiment to improve his memory and solve his nephew’s murder.

My Hollywood
A Novel
Mona Simpson
Alfred A. Knopf, $28.95
A Filipina nanny and her Pacific Palisades employer wrestle with the many dimensions of motherhood.

Of Love and Evil
A Novel
Anne Rice
Alfred A. Knopf, $24.95
Rice’s “Songs of the Seraphim” cycle continues with a story set in the high Italian Renaissance.

The Passages of H.M.
A Novel of Herman Melville
Jay Parini
Doubleday, $26.95
The author of “The Last Station” turns his attention from Tolstoy to Herman Melville, using wife Lizzie — who’s losing faith in her novelist husband — as a lens.

Rescue
A Novel
Anita Shreve
Little, Brown, $26.99
A car crash that brings two people together — a rookie paramedic and a young woman in a totaled car — resonates 18 years later in their daughter’s volatile life.

Sunset Park
A Novel
Paul Auster
Henry Holt, $25
The spaces between fathers and sons, and young writers and musicians come together.

Take One Candle Light a Room
A Novel
Susan Straight
Pantheon, $23.95
A high-speed car-chase of a novel set in the Other Southern California, an area many won’t recognize.

The True Memoirs of Little K
A Novel
Adrienne Sharp
Farrar, Straus & Giroux, $25
Passion, politics and ballet in the court of Czar Nicholas II.

What I Didn’t See
And Other Stories
Karen Joy Fowler
Small Beer Press, $24
The author of “The Jane Austen Book Club” spins fantastic tales of curses, family submarines and Lincoln’s assassination.

Work Song
A Novel
Ivan Doig
Riverhead, $25.95
Doig depicts the West that few readers know — Butte, Mont., and the Anaconda Co., once the copper-mining and smelting centers of a burgeoning U.S. economy.
Sunday, October 2

Peter Kirk Community Center

**Multipurpose Room (3)**

10am: Graphic Novel Workshop-Ice Age Cataclysm!
David Shapiro

11am: Fact to Fiction—Creating the Literary Novel
Ivan Doig, Jonathan Evison, Nancy Horan, Jim Lynch and Indu Sundaresan

Noon: Blogging to Books
Candace Dempsey and Tom Masters

1pm: *Erik Kerhel, The Kid with the Red Juice Mustache*

2pm: Northwest Women’s Voices—Poetry
Kelli Russell Agodon, Elizabeth Austen, Jeannine Gailey and Susan Rich

3pm: Original Music Inspired by *The Time Machine* by H.G. Wells
Performed by Bushwick Book Club.

4pm: Songs Inspired by Books
Levi Fuller and Joshua Morrison

5pm: Speculative Fiction and Fantasy
Bruce Cordell, Erik Scott de Bie and Susan J. Morris

Peter Kirk Community Center

**Small Meeting Room (3)**

1pm: History that Happened
Ed Nixon and C. Mark Smith

Kirkland Library (4)

1pm: Children’s Book Illustrators
Erik Brooks, Craig Orback and Richard Jesse Watson

2pm: Children’s Picture Book Authors
Suzanne Kaufman, Deb Lund and Wendy Wahman

3pm: Encouraging Reluctant Readers (Especially Boys)
Joni Sensel, Catherine Schaeffer and Mie Mie Wu

4pm: Chapter by Chapter—Books for Middle Grade Readers
Peg Kehret, David Patneaude, Suzanne Williams and J. Elizabeth Mills
You're back on the bottom rung of the Pacific NW list, Ivan!

From: Nelson, Christopher (PGI)
Sent: Wednesday, February 16, 2011 11:42 AM
To: Davis, Kathryn; Einhorn, Amy; Held, Ivan; Kloske, Geoffrey; Malonzo, Michelle; Minnich, Sara; Morrissey, Jake; Nyren, Neil; Perciasepe, Laura; Saletan, Rebecca; Sorensen, Stephanie; Stark, Kate; Stein, Elizabeth
Subject: FW: Eight Regional Indie Bestseller Lists for w/e February 13, 2011

Eight Regional Indie Bestseller Lists for the sales week ended Sunday, February 13, 2011 may be accessed by clicking on the links below.
Thanks,
Pete

New England Independent Booksellers Association (NEIBA):
http://www.bookweb.org/files/open/docs/indiebound/regional/110216ne.txt

Southern Independent Booksellers Alliance (SIBA):
http://www.bookweb.org/files/open/docs/indiebound/regional/110216si.txt

Mountains & Plains Independent Booksellers Association (MPIBA):
http://www.bookweb.org/files/open/docs/indiebound/regional/110216mp.txt

Pacific Northwest Booksellers Association (PNBA):
http://www.bookweb.org/files/open/docs/indiebound/regional/110216pn.txt

The Heartland Independent Bestseller List (GLIBA and MBA combined):
http://www.bookweb.org/files/open/docs/indiebound/regional/110216he.txt
DON'T PRAY ON ME: When Christopher Hitchens announced recently that he would be undergoing chemotherapy for esophageal cancer, bloggers began debating whether it would be appropriate to pray for the famous atheist and author of "God Is Not Great." "Hitchens MUST outlive Kissinger," the British columnist Johann Hari wrote on Twitter, referring to the man Hitchens, in his memoir "Hitch-22." No. 15 on the hardcover fiction list this week, calls a "lair, murderer, war criminal, pseudo-academic" and — perhaps most unforgivably — "bore." But Hari added: "I for one will be praying for him. He would HATE that." While Hitchens himself doesn't seem to have issued any official directives, prayers have rolled in from Elizabeth Scalia (no relation to the Supreme Court justice) at First Things, Greg Kandra at The Deacon's Bench and Pat Archbold at The National Catholic Register. (Pray, but "keep it to yourself," one commenter advised Archbold. "He will know the difference when he converts.")

Jeffrey Goldberg, a colleague of Hitchens's at The Atlantic Monthly, consulted the rabbinical authorities and decided that prayer was O.K. On his blog, Goldberg quoted the advice of David Wolpe, a Los Angeles rabbi who has publicly debated Hitchens on a number of occasions: "I would say it is appropriate and even mandatory to do what one can for another who is sick; and if you believe that praying helps, to pray. It is in any case an expression of one's deep hopes. So yes, I will pray for him, but I will not insult him by asking or implying that he should be grateful for my prayers." Meanwhile, one commenter on The Times's ArtsBeat blog came up with a nontheological solution. "The small, blue glowing matter in my brain is beaming quarks to your vital spirit," one "Coldheart" from Kingston, N.Y., wrote to Hitchens, adding — perhaps in a nod to the prayermongers — "Protect yourself at all times."

MADE IN JAPAN: The British novelist David Mitchell scores his first American best seller with "The Thousand Autumns of Jacob de Zoet," the story of a clerk with the Dutch East Indies Company in 18th century Japan. It enters at No. 14 on the hardcover fiction list this week, after going all the way to No. 1 in England in May. In an essay written around the time of the publication of his first novel "Ghostwritten" (1999), Mitchell, who spent much of the 1990s teaching English in Japan, gave a "nuthatchingly edited" list of his Japanese influences: haiku, Zen art, Mishima's "Sea of Fertility," the music of Toru Takemitsu (which demonstrates "how loud silence can be"), but also the everyday poetry of the street — Japanese buses, faces, disaster movies, red-light districts, open windows, cinema queues, schoolkid herds, mountains, petty gangsters, music, beauty, grot. Other country's grot is always exotic grot," Mitchell wrote. "On my walk to the station today I saw a woman sipping into her mobile phone, her makeup running, kneeing by a bin of scorching cans — and thought — like the true parasite writers are — "Hey, bet I can use that!"

Jennifer Schuessler
LIT LIFE |

BY MARY ANN GWINN
Seattle Times staff reporter

Author Ivan Doig at his home in Innis Arden. He's at his keyboard by 6:30 a.m. and tries to write at least a couple of hundred words a day.

Bookish men, mining men and 'big elbow-y stories' in Butte, Mont.

AUTHOR APPEARANCES

Ivan Doig

The author of "Work Song" will read from his book at these area locations:

- At 7 p.m. Tuesday at Village Books in Bellingham (360-671-2626 or www.villagebooks.com).
- At noon Wednesday at Watermark Book Co. in Anacortes (360-293-4277).
- At 7 p.m. July 29 at Parkplace Books in Kirkland (425-828-6546 or...
Butte was at its biggest in 1918 and in 1919, the same year as the Seattle General Strike. That was very much on the minds of the authorities in Butte, and one reason they were worried about the Wobbly (the radical International Workers of the World union). There are Butte people at all my readings, from half a dozen to 20 or 30. They're still proud of Butte and still taken with it.

Q: Reintroduce us to Morrie Morgan.
A: What he's been doing (since the end of "The Whistling Season") has been left to the imagination. He's older. Morrie is going ... where are the riches? He's a lightweight, 125-130 pounds. He loves his duds, loves his books, loves the high life.

Q: Is the character Sandy Sandison, the Butte city librarian with the dubious past and a lust for rare books, based on a real person?
A: Sandison is based on a historical character, Granville Stuart, an early cattle king and one of the many powers behind the Montana cattlemen's association. They were trying to wipe out rustlers in the Missouri Breaks area. (Sandison's vigilant activities are based on this history.)

(After a severe winter wiped out his cattle), Stuart wound up as the librarian of Butte. He didn't have anything else, and he always was bookish. I made up Sandison — Stuart took the job to have an income. Sandison became the librarian because he was a book aficionado par excellence.

Q: Which do you prefer, writing or researching?
A: The research is the necessary spadework. Even when I was working on my doctorate (history, University of Washington) I was writing poetry, the occa-
Hi, Heather--

I was a cheap date at Sunday's NW Bookfest gig that you set up, simply mileage for 32 miles. Highly successful event, full house, couple of hundred people, good attention to Work Song and my next book that Becky has in hand even as we speak. This was a revived Bookfest after languishing and even vanishing for a few years, and it seemed like a success.

Best.
Ivan
Hello, Ivan,
I'll give you a call tomorrow about this, but wanted to send along this request for your participation in the Northwest Bookfest on Oct 2 at 11AM in Kirkland, WA. I'm not sure if you're available to travel or are interested, but we can discuss tomorrow. With Nancy Pearl moderating, I'm sure it would be a great panel!

Best,
Heather

Heather A. Connor
Publicity Manager
Berkley, NAL, Perigee & Riverhead Trade Paperbacks
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From: Deborah Schneider [mailto:dschneid@kcls.org]
Sent: Thursday, July 07, 2011 2:33 PM
To: PGI Riverhead Web
Subject: Northwest Bookfest

Hello,
The Northwest Bookfest will take place October 1 and 2 in Kirkland, Washington. With over 100 authors, covering everything from children's books, to young adult to adult fiction and non-fiction, it will be an exciting two day festival celebrating the written word.

I would like to invite Ivan Doig, who lives in the area, to be on a panel of Historical Literary Authors, which will be moderated by Nancy Pearl. The panel is taking place on Sunday, October 2 at 11am. The panel will be speaking for 50 minutes, and a book signing will follow.

If you could pass this information on to Mr. Doig, I would greatly appreciate it.

Thank you,

Deborah Schneider, Public Programming Coordinator
King County Library System
960 Newport Way NW
Issaquah, WA 98027
425.369.3319

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2010 Busiest Library System in the U.S.
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2011 Library of the Year
Announced by Gale/Library Journal, June 2011
Welcome

Download the Northwest Bookfest 2011 Author Program Schedule & Map

View the Writing Workshop Schedule

October 1 & 2, 2011, 10am – 6pm

Peter Kirk Park, 202 Third Street, Kirkland, WA

Over fifty author panels, hundreds of authors, writing and publishing workshops, family programs and more!

FREE!

Will you help us bring this fabulous event back again next year? Your donation will help us start the planning right now for an even bigger and better event. Suggested donation: $5 per person; $10 per family.

Donations will be gratefully accepted at Bookfest. THANK YOU!
Northwest Bookfest: Alive and well in Kirkland

BY MARY ANN GWINN
Seattle Times book editor

That faint glow on Lake Washington's eastern shore isn't a backyard barbecue gone bad — it's the organizers of the 2011 Northwest Bookfest working late to put the finishing touches on their event, set for the weekend of Oct. 1 and 2.

Bookfest, a regional celebration of books and authors which migrated around the city of Seattle for several years (most recently in Columbia City in 2009), has been revived and is moving to Kirkland, thanks to support from the city of Kirkland, the King County Library System and several area sponsors, including Book Publishers Northwest. Events will be geared toward writers and readers, including children and young adults.

The lineup thus far features mostly local authors, but it's a deep bench. Best-selling Woodinville author Karl Marlantes ("Matterhorn," "What It Is Like to Go to War") will discuss "Writing the War: Vietnam" with Seattle novelist Matt Briggs (Oct. 1). And Northwest icon Ivan Doig will discuss creating the "literary" novel with Jonathan Evison, Nancy Horan, Jim Lynch and Indu Sundaresan (Oct. 2).

There's a panel of Northwest thriller writers, including Robert Dugoni, Mike Lawson, Boyd Morrison and Kevin O'Brien (Oct. 1). Regional urban fantasy/steampunk authors Kat Richardson, Cherie Priest, Mark Henry and Mark Teppo will discuss the genre(s) (Oct. 1). In a ticketed event ($10), tea will be served with regional romance novelists Elizabeth Boyle, Lisa Kleypas, Susan Mallery and Susan Wiggs (Oct. 2, Parkplace Books in Kirkland, 425-828-6546). Popular young adult/paranormal author Richelle Mead will appear on a "Smart Chicks" event Oct. 2. BookIt Repertory Theater and the Bushwick Book Club, both performing groups that derive their inspiration from books, will make appearances.

Another signature event

Back this year for the 24th year: the Seattle Antiquarian Book Fair takes place Oct. 8 and 9 at the Seattle Center Exhibition Hall. This is a must-go event for lovers of old and rare books, maps, photographs and ephemera (love that word). Tickets are $5 and cover both days: for more information go to www.seattlebookfair.com.

Mary Ann Gwinn: 206-464-2357 or mgwinn@seattletimes.com
A pair of real characters

By JEFF BAKER
THE OREGONIAN

Ivan Doig’s 2006 novel “The Whistling Season” is narrated by Paul Milliron, a school superintendent in the 1950s who looks back on his life as a boy on the Montana prairie in 1909. Another character, loquacious schoolteacher Morrie Morgan, steals the narrative away from Milliron and his family.

“He was wildly popular with readers,” Doig said from his home in Seattle. “People would say to me, ‘I wish I had a teacher like him.’ I couldn’t get him out of my head.”

Doig said Milliron was “a very bright kid who goes to school in a one-room schoolhouse and does his chores faithfully, much like I was.” Morgan, on the other hand, “with his erudition and free-form flights of rhetoric, his glories in the music of English and Latin,” was someone he wanted to spend more time around.

“I couldn’t resist,” Doig said, laughing.

“Work Song,” Doig’s new novel, is narrated by Morgan. It takes place 10 years after “The Whistling Season,” in 1919, and begins with Morgan stepping off the train in Butte, Mont., “with nothing else around but the Rocky Mountains and the witnessing sky.” Morgan is soon involved in a series of adventures in a town that, like the character, Doig found irresistible.

“I felt like I had been dealt a pair of aces,” Doig said of Morgan and Butte. “Butte was such an amazing place, rough and tough and so on but with real pretensions to be something else. It was the biggest city in the northern Rockies at that time, almost 100,000 people, and full of all sorts of people who came there for the money. I’m from the other Montana, you know. Some of the places I grew up weren’t big enough to be called towns, and Butte was like Las Vegas to us.”

Copper was king in Butte, and the Anaconda Copper Mining Co. ruled the kingdom with a copper fist. The company was known for treating its workers poorly and Doig said he had “no qualms about making (it) the villain of the story. Every time they had the chance to cut wages or sic the goons on the workers or call in the National Guard, they did it.”

“Work Song” is Doig’s 10th novel and his first for a different publisher, Riverhead Books. His longtime editor, Becky Saltenan, is editorial director at Riverhead and brought Doig with her from Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. He calls Saltenan “one of the three essential women who prop me up,” along with his agent, Liz Darhansoff, and his wife, Carol. Doig said his wife “has a pretty good sense of plot” and he shows her his novels at about 50 pages and 125 pages to get a sense of how the narrative is moving along.

Ivan Doig | Has written his 10th novel

ivandoig.com

Doig reads from “Work Song” at 7:30 p.m. Friday, July 23, at Powell’s City of Books, 1005 W. Burnside St.

Jeff Baker: 503-221-8165; jbaker@news.oregonian.com; oregonlive.com/books

 recommends readings and events

Carola Dunn: The author reads from “A Colourful Death.” 4 p.m. Sun, July 18. Murder by the Book, 3210 S.E. Hawthorne Blvd; 503-232-9995

“The Crying Tree”: Naseem Rakha reads from the novel of a family’s journey toward justice and forgiveness. 7 p.m. Thu, July 22. Powell’s Books at Cedar Hills Crossing, 3415 S.W. Cedar Hills Blvd., Beaverton; www.powells.com or 503-228-4651

“The Lunatic, the Love, and the Poet”: Myrline Hermes reads from the re-imaging of “Hamlet.” 7:30 p.m. Thu, July 22. Annie Bloom’s Books, 7834 S.W. Capitol Highway; www.annieblooms.com or 503-246-0053

Frank Bruni: Bruni reads from “Born Round,” an account of his lifelong struggle with food. 7:30 p.m. Thu, July 22. Powell’s City of Books, 1005 W. Burnside St., www.powells.com or 503-228-4651

Unless otherwise indicated, events are open to the public at no charge.

For more, see the Literary Calendar in The Sunday Oregonian.