

The Reader



at Literary Leftovers Bookstore

Issue 8

Sept./Oct. 2025

LETTER FROM THE PROPRIETRESS

Building Bridges

Heather Erwin, proprietress



Through decades of reading I've learned that books are so much more than paper and ink; they are bridges, invitations, and tools that connect us as neighbors and help our community flourish, which is why I often say our shop is less about selling books and more about building community. Of course we love helping you find your next favorite read, but what really excites me is seeing how stories bring people together. Literacy isn't just about reading—it's about connection, confidence, and opportunity.

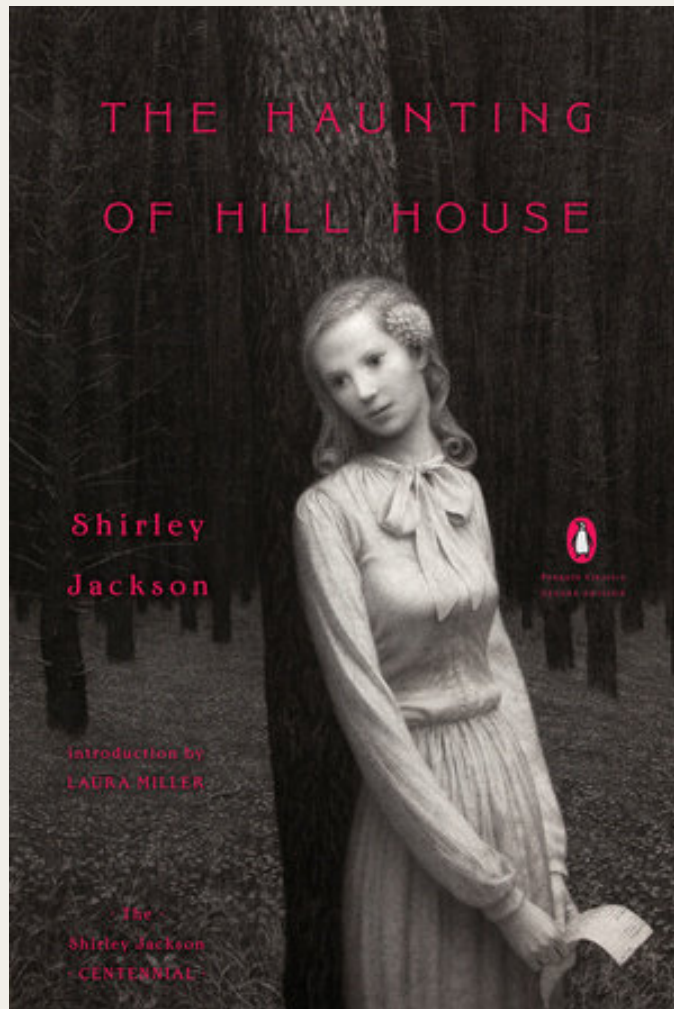
Every week we watch kids discover the magic of books during our story times. Their eyes widen, their imaginations spark, and before long they're begging to turn the pages themselves. When our book clubs meet, we wrestle with new (and old) ideas, laugh with one another, and deepen our friendships. Those conversations and moments remind me that literacy isn't just about skill-building, it's about knitting the fabric of a stronger, more resilient and more connected community, which is the core of our mission.

Investing in literacy is one of the best gifts a community can give itself. Think about how much of life depends on reading: job applications, prescription labels, voter ballots, even a simple recipe. Without strong literacy skills, everyday tasks can feel overwhelming. That's why programs like our free tutoring, story times, and book clubs matter. They offer more than books—they offer dignity, independence, and opportunity. When people can read confidently, they can work better jobs, earn better wages, and help local businesses (like ours!) thrive. Employers gain skilled workers, families gain stability, and our local economy becomes stronger and more self-sustaining. In that sense, every book in a child's hand is also an investment in the future prosperity of Battle Ground.

Books introduce us to people and places far beyond our own experiences, building empathy and understanding. When citizens are confident readers, they are more likely to engage in civic life, whether that means voting, volunteering, or showing up to town meetings. A community of readers is a community of informed, involved, and caring people.

I see literacy as both personal and communal. It gives children a head-start in school, helps adults navigate daily life, and allows families to share stories across generations. It preserves culture, ignites creativity, and strengthens community bonds. But here's what I love most: literacy builds empathy. When we read, we step into lives unlike our own. We understand each other better, and that makes us kinder neighbors and more thoughtful citizens. Every story shared in our shop reminds me that literacy is a gift we give not only to ourselves but to one another.

What can you do? Read to your kids. Donate books. Come join us at author nights and book releases. Every page turned here strengthens the fabric of our town. Together, we can make sure that Battle Ground isn't just a spot on the map but a place where stories, voices, and opportunities flourish.



BOOKSELLER'S REVIEW

The Haunting of Hill House (1959)

by Shirley Jackson

reviewed by Eily McIlvain, bookseller



Oh, October. At this time of writing, the cold hasn't come in yet, candles haven't come out, no crisp leaves. But soon. I'm already tending my reading list for the months of autumn, because autumn is the time to read one of my favorite genres: gothic. And there's no better example of a gothic novel than Shirley Jackson's *The Haunting of Hill House*.

A note: when I say gothic, I mean the particular subgenre of horror that powers its engine with sublime terror, the uncanny, and human desire. Sarah Perry, a gothic writer, said in an interview with the Historical Novel Society, "I am especially interested in the 'sublime', a key component of the Gothic and something which, according to the essayist Burke, is a sensation which moves us beyond merely experiencing a sense of beauty into a transport of awe, and wonder, and even terror." She also wrote in an essay, "The gothic is, rather, a sensation, like hunger or desire; and, like hunger or desire, you may be hard-pressed to describe it, but you'll know it when you feel it."

Reader, you'll feel it in Hill House. A young woman called Eleanor Vance goes to stay the summer in an allegedly haunted house at the invitation of paranormal investigator Dr. John Montague. Two other paranormal "assistants" join the good doctor and Eleanor: a young man named Luke who will inherit the house one day, and an artist called Theodora. Before they even arrive, one of the most iconic openings of any horror novel informs the reader that Hill House is 'not sane'. This house has been built slightly off, the house is arrogant, something about it resists humanity.

Most of Jackson's stories take place in an uncanny domestic or suburban sphere, where familiar trappings of home and community are turned against the characters, and the reader. On one hand, *Hill House* seems to be a standard ghost story, but like all great ghost stories, I think it's actually about people. What we can mean to each other, and what we can't. It's more chilling than blood and toothy monsters. As the dark season comes over us, this is a must read for fans of atmospheric horror.

BOOKSELLER'S COLUMN

The Pleasure of Literacy

Eily McIlvain, bookseller



It feels intellectually unserious to concern himself with fictional people marrying one another. But there it is: literature moves him. One of his professors calls it "the pleasure of being touched by great art."...It suggests to Connell that the same imagination he uses as a reader is necessary to understand real people also, and to be intimate with them.

—Sally Rooney, *Normal People*

At the shop when we talk about literacy, of course we mean what you might call basic literacy: the ability to read and write. But increasingly it's become obvious that we also mean something more than that: the urge and ability to read for pleasure, to enjoy stories and derive meaning from them. Literacy, without this component, is incomplete. In October 2024 Sunil Iyengar, who directs the Office of Research & Analysis at the National Endowment of the Arts, wrote, "The ability to read well and the inclination to read for pleasure are intimately connected."

Before I could read for myself, I loved stories, because my parents read them to me. As I got older, I began to feel that a literary world underlies our own, like an x-ray of a body. This literary world is full of interesting characters and plots, and it fascinated me. It gave me a way to think about the world, and I was excited when I recognized things from novels in life, and things from life in novels. I feel that my life began when I recognized this world of imagination as an extension of the living world around me. From then on, I wanted to experience that world; I wanted to live, and to live had become inseparable from reading and writing.

If you enjoy stories, a book effortlessly becomes something to scry into and consider. Inevitably you find yourself looking closer at the story, turning it over in your mind. This is where interesting essays and interpretations originate, as well as fan culture. A book changes from something passively consumed into a story that acts on the reader as much as the reader acts on the story. This feeling is the heart of literacy, and while basic literacy is the necessary bit, I think this feeling of engagement with and curiosity about a text is what produces the types of readers we want to see in our world. Real interest pushes us towards real analysis, but we can only get there because of an honest love.

I don't think it's ever too late to fall into that kind of love. Lately I've been tutoring a pair of brothers. When I asked them what their goals were, academically, each reported: To read a book. The boys will sit for a long time, heads bent over booklets, practicing their letters. When I ask, they insist they aren't bored, even if they admit their necks and wrists ache. This is exactly where I might expect real love for stories and words to grow; inside a young person who, arriving slightly late to their literacy, already feels some sense of calm or concentration come over him as he moves his pencil.

The Little Reader



"No one can imprison the mind."
Gandhi

LETTER FROM THE CHILDREN'S EDITOR

Books & So Much More

Corrie Albertson, children's program manager

With the start of another school year we begin shifting gears here at the bookstore, as I'm sure you're doing at home. The summer bucket-lists, finished or not, are tucked away, and the books, along with paper and pencil, reemerge.

One of our passions here is to put the perfect book in the hands of our readers, especially in the children's section. Helping children discover the excitement of reading creates life-long learners. When children can read, there are no limits to the things they can achieve. Reading is the great equalizer. Almost all of our children's programs are geared toward education and literacy. Reading improves brain function, expands vocabulary, boosts empathy, enhances knowledge and learning, and builds discipline, focus, and confidence. Illiteracy, on the other, hand has a crippling effect, limiting opportunities, advancement, and outcomes. We take our jobs very seriously, and we want to see every child succeed in the pursuit of their dreams. Each of our programs are created and curated to support you and your children on their learning journey.

We may not be free like the library, but we try to keep our costs low so that books are accessible to everyone, and all of our children's programs are free, thanks to our annual Art & Poetry Calendar and Exhibition.

This year marks our 3rd annual **K-12 Community Calendar and Art & Poetry Exhibit**, which will take place on November 13th. **Submissions open September 1st and close Saturday, October 18, 2025.** Submissions should be submitted in the shop or by email to literaryleftoversusedbooks@gmail.com, and should include the child's full name, age, grade, and a phone number or email address where we can contact participants. Only submissions formatted in the landscape orientation will be selected for the calendar, but all of the family-friendly art and poetry submissions we receive will be included in our exhibition.

This year we're also excited to announce that our exhibit will be going on tour to the Battle Ground Public Library, as well as a local retirement community, The Park at University Place. There will also be ongoing opportunities for our participants to be showcased right here in *The Little Reader*.

I'd like to take this opportunity to share the rest of the programs you can find at the shop.



We've recently added a **Junior Book Club** for 8-12 year olds. We meet the third Thursday of every month from 3-3:30pm. The kids have a month to read the selected book, and then we get together to discuss, eat snacks, and do an activity. This club, like all of our children's programs, is free, but does require you to sign up so that we can be best prepared. Our books for September and October are: *Because of Winn Dixie* and *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*.

The Little Reader is another opportunity for you and your kids to get involved. We are always looking for contributors. We welcome book reviews from parents and children alike. We also accept interviews, short stories, poetry, and art. This is a great way to get your child excited about writing. It's thrilling for them to see their work in print!

Lego Club meets for an hour every **Tuesday at 10am, and Thursday at 4pm**. Kids are welcome to build freely, but we also have a weekly theme if they prefer a guided build. This is a good opportunity for socialization; children can work together or parallel play. They're given the chance to share their creation with the group at the end, but this is completely optional.

We are just wrapping up our **Summer Reading Program**. Every summer starting in June and running through August children can come into the store and pick up a reading log, and for every 10 just-right books or chapters that they read, they can return the log to the store and pick a prize.

ART EXHIBITION
3rd Annual Literary Leftovers
K-12 Community

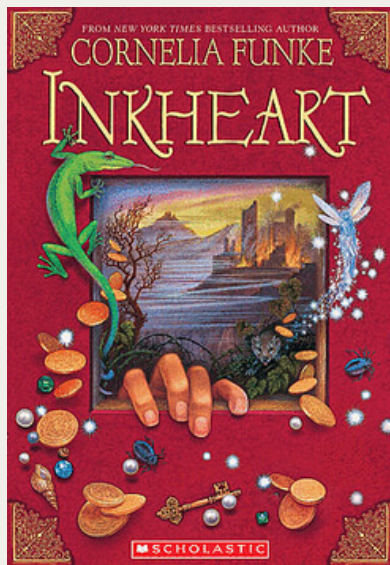
Art by Hanalei Sweet, grade 6, age 11

NOV.13.2025
6-7 PM | 813 W. MAIN ST. #105, BATTLE GROUND WA
Immerse yourself in a vibrant world of painting & poetry from our community's young artists. **FREE**

Free tutoring is available at the store following a brief waiting period while we find a match for your students' needs. If you are interested in receiving tutoring, or in volunteering as a tutor, please contact Miss Corrie via email. Tutoring takes place at the store, and sessions usually last 30-60 minutes.

Storytime every Tuesday at 11am, with guest speakers once a month. Our guest speakers introduce the children to different careers and hobbies. Since the launch of this program we've had a florist, fire fighter, Miss Clark County, a photographer, pilot, policeman, musician, mayor, dental hygienist, NASA mechanical engineer, seamstress, author, illustrator, reporter, child entrepreneur, non-profit organizer, and LEGO Store employee. Children get an opportunity to learn and ask questions, and some of our older children get the opportunity to be the reporters who interview our guests. They can then write up their interviews, which we publish here in *The Reader*. We are always looking for people to come in and talk with the kids about what they do. Please reach out if you're interested. We would love to hear about your job or hobby!

We also offer a smattering of other children's events throughout the year. We love to do crafts, and we make every holiday special around here with our annual **Polar Express Pajama Party**, St. Patrick's Day coin hunts, handmade Valentines, Stone Soup parties, Dr. Seuss birthday celebrations, and more. We hope you'll come in and join us! No kids, no problem! We have plenty of ways for you to get involved.



READER NOTES *Inkheart* by Cornelia Funke

Inkheart is Aurora's (age 9) favorite book. She gives it 5 stars because it's very engaging. She loves to read because, "when I am stressed, it calms

me down and takes me somewhere new."

CAREER INVESTIGATIONS

Adele Anaya, Entrepreneur



Every Tuesday, Miss Corrie leads **Storytime with Corrie** from 11-11:30am, right after Lego Club. Once a month, Storytime hosts a special guest; a local professional or experienced enthusiast to talk to the children about their work and read a related story. In this issue, Adele Anaya, the 8-year-old founder of the nonprofit Tix for Tots is interviewed by another young entrepreneur, Felix Kalvels, also aged 8.

Tell me about your nonprofit.

It's called Tix for Tots. We buy tickets for zoos, museums and plays for underprivileged kids and their families.

What inspired you to start your nonprofit?

We were going to a museum and noticed how expensive it was. So we wanted to do something about it.

How long have you been doing it?

It was founded in September 2024.

Do any of your family members help?

My mom is the vice president, my dad is the treasurer, and my brother is the security guard.

What has been the biggest challenge?

We had our first gala and that was nerve-racking and tricky.

What are you most proud of?

I've already helped 32 families. So that's pretty neat.

Schedule

LEGO CLUB

at 10am Tuesdays & 4pm Thursdays.

STORYTIME WITH CORRIE

with special guests once a month
at 11am Tuesdays, right after Lego Club.

SUMMER J.V. BOOK CLUB

at 3-3:30pm Thursday, September 18
at 3-3:30pm Thursday, October 16

ART & POETRY SUBS OPEN

September 1st

ART & POETRY SUBS CLOSE

October 18th

Upcoming

BOTTLED BOOK CLUB at EMANAR CELLARS

September 11, 6pm, \$5
October 9, 6pm, \$5

OVERSTACKED BOOK CLUB

September 25, 6pm at the shop, \$5
October 23, 6pm at the shop, \$5

LOCAL AUTHOR PANEL

October 2, 6pm at the shop, FREE

Accepting submissions!

Tues.-Fri. 10-6, Sat. 10-5
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