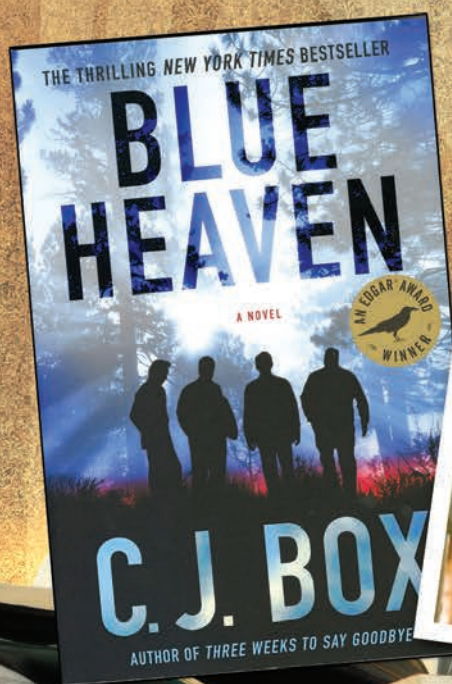


Readers' Guide for

BLUE HEAVEN

2011 Everybody Reads Selection



What if everybody read the same book? What if those readers had multiple opportunities, both formal and informal, to talk to each other about the book? What if a wide variety of agencies, both public and private, came together to sponsor such a region-wide effort, thus declaring with one voice that reading is not only a source of individual pleasure, but a tool for community-building? What if the author came to our community to join in the discussion?

This is the idea that Jim Hepworth of Confluence Press brought to the Lewis-Clark Valley in 2000. He contacted Lewiston City Library and Asotin County Library and the program was born. Since then, our communities have read and discussed ten different books and enjoyed interaction with the authors of those books. The program has expanded throughout the region to Lapwai, Pullman, Moscow, Colfax, Palouse, St. John, Nezperce, Asotin, Pomeroy and Dayton.

PREVIOUS EVERYBODY READS SELECTIONS

2001

Teresa Jordan
Riding the White Horse Home

2002

John N. Maclean
Fire on the Mountain

2003

Chris Crutcher
Whale Talk

2004

Craig Lesley
The Sky Fisherman

2005

Jess Walter
Citizen Vince

2006

George W. Aguilar
When the River Ran Wild!

2007

Gregg Olsen
The Deep Dark: Disaster and Redemption in America's Richest Silver Mine

2008

Gary Ferguson and Douglas Smith
Decade of the Wolf: Returning the Wild to Yellowstone

2009

David Guterson
The Other

2010

Molly Gloss
The Hearts of Horses

C. J. Box is the New York Times best-selling author of thirteen novels including the Joe Pickett series. He won the Edgar Allan Poe Award for Best Novel (*Blue Heaven*, 2009) as well as the Anthony Award, Prix Calibre 38 (France), the Macavity Award, the Gumshoe Award, the Barry Award, and the 2010 Mountains & Plains Independent Booksellers Association Award for fiction. *Blue Heaven* and *Nowhere to Run* have been optioned for film.



Box is a Wyoming native and has worked as a ranch hand, surveyor, fishing guide, a small town newspaper reporter and editor. In 2008, Box was awarded the “BIG WYO” Award from the state tourism industry. An avid outdoorsman, Box has hunted, fished, hiked, ridden, and skied throughout Wyoming and the Mountain West. He served on the Board of Directors for the Cheyenne Frontier Days Rodeo. He co-owns an international tourism marketing firm with his wife, Laurie. They live in Wyoming with their three daughters.

ABOUT *BLUE HEAVEN*

WINNER OF THE 2008 EDGAR AWARD FOR BEST NOVEL... Four weeks on the extended *New York Times* bestseller list...Optioned for film by producers Michael Besman (*About Schmidt*) and Cameron Lamb...Selected by the American Library Association as a 2008 Reading List award winner in the category “Adrenaline”... This break-out novel from the author of the *New York Times* bestselling Joe Pickett novels is “a non-stop thrill-ride...a provocative suspense novel that has you rooting for the characters every step of the way.” — Harlan Coben

A twelve-year-old girl and her younger brother go on the run in the woods of North Idaho, pursued by four men they have just watched commit murder — four men who know exactly who William and Annie are, and who know exactly where their desperate mother is waiting for news of her children’s fate. Retired cops from Los Angeles, the killers easily persuade the inexperienced sheriff to let them lead the search for the missing children.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What kind of people live in Kootenai Bay—what kind of community is it? How has the area been changing over the past several years? How has it earned its epithet, *Blue Heaven*, and what about that nickname is ironic in the course of the novel?
2. What prompts Annie and William to set off on their own to go fishing? In what way do they feel let down by the adult world?
3. What kind of child is Annie? What character traits do we see from the onset that will help her survive the events that follow?
4. Annie and William find protection with Jess Rawlins. But Rawlins doesn't believe the children's story at first. What eventually convinces him?
5. In what way is Rawlins an unlikely hero? Some see him as a throwback to the iconic heroes of the old-West myth. Do you agree? If you are a Western novel buff, what other fictional heroes does he resemble?
6. The criminals keep Monica Taylor away from the media and the phone. Is she overly passive, too easily manipulated, or are retired cops simply too cunning to resist?
7. Why is Eduardo Villatoro obsessed with the Santa Anna Racetrack robbery, and what brings him to northern Idaho?
8. What motivates the banker to join forces with Rawlins and the children?
9. Are you satisfied with how the novel ends? Do the retired policemen get what they deserve...or not?

IF YOU ENJOYED READING *BLUE HEAVEN*, YOU MIGHT ALSO WANT TO READ C.J.'S OTHER NOVELS, OR ANY OF THE FOLLOWING BOOKS:

FICTION

The Blight Way by Patrick F. McManus (2006) Simon & Schuster
Bo Tully, sheriff of Blight County, Idaho, and a fellow who dropped twenty pounds on Atkins, had been thinking about asking out Jan Whittle, his grade-school sweetheart. Problem is, he's already promised to celebrate his dad's seventy-fifth birthday with him. Thwarted romance proves to be the least of Bo's problems, however, when a dead body turns up on Batim Scragg's ranch. Forced to put on his sleuthing hat, Bo finds himself faced with a whole slew of possible suspects. And what quickly becomes apparent is that, while the sheriff's investigative methods may not exactly be legal, they are, for better or worse, *The Blight Way*.

City of the Sun by David Levien (2006) Doubleday

In this debut novel from screenwriter Levien, a kidnapped child leads an emotionally wounded private detective and his client down a relentlessly grim trail from middle America to the darkest deserts of Mexico. Young Jamie Gabriel is in the middle of his predawn paper route when he's snatched from an Indianapolis street by bouncer Tad Ford and his partner Rooster Mintz. Fourteen months pass before his parents, Paul and Carol, paying yet another hopeless visit to the police station, realize that Captain James Pomeroy, who assured them that their son ran away, has assigned some 20 officer-hours to the case, less than two hours per month. So the time is ripe for them to follow up a tip from a sympathetic cop and hire private investigator Frank Behr, an ex-cop whose career took a nosedive when he ran afoul of Pomeroy and his own son was accidentally killed.

— Kirkus Reviews

Cold Pursuit by T. Jefferson Parker (2003) Hyperion

From the Edgar Award-winning author of *Silent Joe*, a new hard-hitting thriller of murder, vengeance, and secret passions that will keep readers spellbound. Homicide cop Tom McMichael is on the rotation when an 84-year-old city patriarch named Pete Braga is found beat to death. Not good news, especially since the Irish McMichaels and the Portuguese Bragas share a violent family history dating back three generations. Years ago Braga shot McMichael's grandfather in a dispute over a paycheck; soon thereafter Braga's son was severely beaten behind a waterfront bar and legend has it that it was an act of revenge by McMichael's father. McMichael must put aside the old family blood feud, and find the truth about Pete Braga's death.

Tell No One by Harlan Coben (2002) Dell

For eight tormented years, Dr. David Beck has relived the horror of the night he lost his wife. He can still see it clearly; the gleaming lake, the pale moonlight, and he can still hear his wife's piercing screams. But all that changes when a message appears on his computer, a phrase only he and his wife would know. The message comes with a warning. The price for his compliance is high. Now Beck must decide who to trust and who to fear as he heads into the heart of darkness, seeking the truth about that one fateful night.

— Editorial Review Barnes & Noble

Secrets to the Grave by Tami Hoag (2011) Dutton

A horrific murder rocks the town of Oak Knoll, California. The victim is 28-year-old artist Marissa Fordham, the single mother of Haley, a four-year-old found partially strangled and barely clinging to life next to her mother's stabbed and mutilated body. Detective Tony Mendez and his capable crew investigate the crime, while child advocate Anne Leone and her husband, former FBI special agent Vince Leone, take temporary custody of Haley. Among the several suspects is attorney Steve Morgan, the estranged husband of Sara Morgan, whose daughter, Wendy, found a victim of the accused See-No-Evil killer, Peter Crane, who's about to go on trial.

— Publishers Weekly

Blackwater Sound by James W. Hall (2002) St. Martins

Once, A. J. and Darlene Braswell had it all, fortune, three beautiful children, power, and bright futures. But then their golden son, Andy, was killed in a grotesque battle with a giant blue marlin, and in the ten years since his death, the Braswell family has crumbled with Darlene ultimately giving in to suicidal depression, and the family business nearly in ruins. But Morgan and Johnny Braswell are not about to let their father's obsession with the great fish that devastated their family ruin their lives any longer. They've got a plan. And after years of stealing ideas from the notebooks that Andy left behind, they've got a secret weapon that could restore MicroDyne's greatness or destroy it.

— Editorial Review Barnes & Noble

MORE BOOKS BY C.J. BOX

Back of Beyond (2011) Minotaur

Cody Hoyt, while a brilliant cop, is an alcoholic struggling with two months of sobriety when his mentor and AA sponsor Hank Winters is found burned to death in a remote mountain cabin. At first it looks like the suicide of a man who's fallen off the wagon, but when Cody takes a closer look at the scene of his friend's death, it becomes apparent that foul play is at hand.

Three Weeks to Say Goodbye (2008) Minotaur

Jack and Melissa McGuane have spent years trying to have a baby. Finally their dream has come true with the adoption of their daughter, Angelina. But nine months after bringing her home, they receive a devastating phone call... Angelina's birth father, a teenager, never signed away his parental rights—and he wants her back.

Joe Pickett Series (2001–) Minotaur

Joe Pickett, Wyoming Game Warden, has been through some harrowing adventures in the course of this 11 book series. He's taken on environmental terrorists, rogue federal land managers, animal mutilators, crazed cowboy hitmen, corrupt bureaucrats, homicidal animal rights advocates, and violent dysfunctional families. Joe has matured, lost some of his innocence and naïveté, and committed acts that continue to haunt him. But through it all, he has remained true to himself and his family. And even when he knows that pursuing justice will bring the community, state, and his superiors down on his head, well... he just can't help it.

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