

AT THE LIBRARY

New DVDs

Those Who Wish Me Dead (R) – A teenage murder witness finds himself pursued by twin assassins in the Montana wilderness with a survival expert tasked with protecting him—and a forest fire threatening to consume them all.

Die in a Gunfight (R) – In New York City, a young guy falls for the daughter of his father's nemesis.

The Lovebirds (R) – A couple experiences a defining moment in their relationship when they are unintentionally embroiled in a murder mystery.

Dream Horse (PG) – Dream Alliance is an unlikely race horse bred by small-town Welsh bartender Jan Vokes. With no experience, Jan convinces her neighbors to chip in their meager earnings to help raise Dream in the hopes he can compete with the racing elites.

Initiation (R) – Whiton University unravels the night a star-

athlete is murdered, kicking off a spree of social media slayings that force students to uncover the truth behind the school's hidden secrets and the horrifying meaning of an exclamation point.

The Last Champion (PG-13) – When his mother dies, scandal-ridden ex-Olympian John Wright returns to a hometown that has not forgiven him where he gets the opportunity to turn everything around.

Spiral (R) – Working in the shadow of this father, a brash detective and his rookie partner take charge of a grisly investigation into murders that are eerily reminiscent of the city's gruesome past.

The SpongeBob Movie: Sponge on the Run (PG) – After SpongeBob's beloved pet snail Gary is snail-napped, he and Patrick embark on an epic adventure to The Lost City of Atlantic City to bring

Gary home.

Feral State (R) – A misfit gang of runaways and orphans are taken in by a dark and charismatic father figure who together wreak havoc throughout swamps and trailer parks of central Florida.

Jakob's Wife (NR) – Anne, married to a small-town minister, feels her life has been shrinking over the past 30 years. Encountering "The Master" brings her a new sense of power and an appetite to live bolder. However, the change comes with a heavy body count.

Held (NR) – A couple's ailing marriage is put to the test when they are held hostage in an isolated vacation rental by an unseen Voice that commands their every move.

No Man's Land (PG-13) – When a vigilante border patrol turns fatal, a man flees on horseback to Mexico, seeking forgiveness from the victim's father.

New JR Fiction

Amelia Bedelia Scared Silly (Amelia Bedelia) by Herman Parish – Amelia Bedelia, her friends, and her family enjoy some scary (and sweet) fun during Halloween.

Linked by Gordon Korman – Link, Michael, and Dana live in a quiet town. But it's woken up very quickly when someone sneaks into school and vandalizes it. It's up to the three classmates to find the truth.

Forever This Summer by Leslie C. Youngblood – When eleven-year-old Georgie and her sister Peaches relocate to Bogalusa, Louisiana, with their mother to help their Great Aunt Vie, Georgie becomes involved in the search for the truth about her new friend Markie's mother.

Return of ZomBert (ZomBert; 2) by Kara LaReau – Officially adopt-

ed by 9-year-old Mellie Gore after escaping from YummCo Laboratories, ZomBert must play along with Mellie's plan to enter him into the Best Pet contest while plotting his revenge.

New Easy Readers

How to Help a Pumpkin Grow by Ashley Wolff – Follow Dog as he does all he can to help his pumpkins grow and thrive, including accepting unexpected help from other animals.

Dakota Crumb, Tiny Treasure Hunter by Jamie Michalak – A little mouse with a genius for collecting leads readers on a nocturnal seek-and-find adventure.

Hardly Haunted by Jessie Sima – When a house she believes is haunted, she tries everything in her power to stop it in order to get people to move in—until she realizes that she is fine just the way she

is.

Bubbles...Up! by Jacqueline Davies – An everyday visit to the pool transforms into an unforgettable celebration of the water.

Tiny Barbarian by Ame Dyckman – Tiny fantasizes he is a mighty Barbarian who can conquer anything, but even he has trouble conquering the dark.

Principal Tate Is Running Late! by Henry Cole – When their principal is running late, all members of Hardy School must work together to keep things running smoothly!

Bloop by Tara Lazar – Bloop, the little green alien, must conquer Earth, and his first step is figuring out who's in charge. The answer? Dogs!

The Bench by Meghan, the Duchess of Sussex – Captures the relationship between father and son, as seen through a mother's eyes.

England interviews 'The Quiet Zone' author Stephen Kurczy

Marlene England, co-owner of WordPlay bookstore in Wardensville, recently interviewed author Stephen Kurczy, whose book—"The Quiet Zone: Unraveling the Mystery of a Town Suspended in Silence"—released August 3 and is featured in WordPlay's Appalachian nonfiction section.

Q: For readers who haven't heard about you yet, what three things should they know about Stephen Kurczy?

A: I've been a journalist for about 15 years, much of that time as a freelancer, writing for The Christian Science Monitor, The New York Times, Americas Quarterly, among other outlets. I'm also into the outdoors. In my younger days I ran a 2:30 marathon. Now I'm obsessed with rock climbing, and one of my favorite spots is Seneca Rocks in West Virginia—so much so that my younger son is named Seneca.

Even with two kids, I haven't owned a cell phone for over a decade, which is perhaps the most unique thing about myself.

Q: What should readers know about Green Bank, West Virginia?

A: Green Bank is home to America's oldest federal radio as-

tronomy observatory, founded in 1956, and the world's largest fully steerable radio telescope, which is also the tallest structure in West Virginia. Because of the observatory, Green Bank is surrounded by the National Radio Quiet Zone, a 13,000-square-mile-area—the combined landmass of Connecticut and Massachusetts—where cell service, radio antennas, and other forms of wireless connectivity and manmade electronic noise are curtailed and restricted, because that noise undermines the telescope's efforts to "hear" the faint whispers from the universe. It's a place quiet by state and federal laws, as well as by default of the mountainous terrain.

When I talk about Green Bank in my book, I'm often referencing a larger area. Green Bank itself is a small, unincorporated town, while the observatory is spread over several hamlets and the Quiet Zone encompasses all of Pocahontas County. For that reason, the observatory has impacted the surrounding area in many ways, from putting millions of dollars annually into the local economy, to being a key educational partner for schools, to even hosting a wildly deer hunt—so many hunters want to participate every year that the observatory has to narrow down participants with a

raffle lottery.

Q: What inspired you to write *The Quiet Zone*—and why Green Bank?

A: Green Bank is a town where my personal philosophy toward cell phones would appear to be codified into law. Smartphones are reportedly absent, WiFi is purportedly illegal, and even microwaves are said to be outlawed—that's why it's often called "the quietest town in America."

From the beginning, I was captivated by Green Bank—the juxtaposition of high-tech radio telescopes against rolling farmland, the confluence of super brainy astronomers with hard-scrabble farmers, the rumors of dark activities happening in the surrounding forest.

Is the book that released on August 3 different from the book you set out to write?

Green Bank and the surrounding Quiet Zone turned out to be one of the most surprising, fascinating, beguiling places I've ever visited—and I've traveled to more than three dozen countries across four continents. Nothing is what it appears to be. The book is in many ways an unraveling of that facade as I dig into the murkier aspects of the place.

I spent four months in Pocahon-

tas County between 2017 and 2019. It didn't take long before I found smartphones and WiFi to be pervasive throughout town. Once people started opening up to me, I actually found it challenging to find anyone without WiFi or cell phones.

That said, Green Bank is still way quieter than most other places in America, and that quiet comes in many forms: the lack of radio signals, the sparse population, the absence of highways, the isolation in nature, the cheap land, the limited law enforcement in a Rhode Island-sized county.

Q: What feedback do you expect to receive from the Green Bank residents you write about in the book?

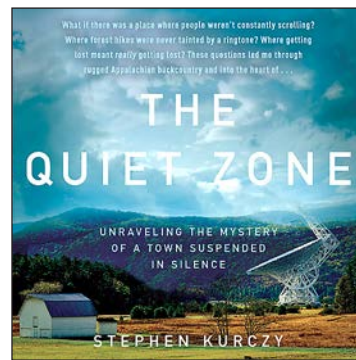
A: I hope they say I was honest and fair. I was paranoid—and remain paranoid—about having inaccuracies in the book, so it went through rigorous fact-checking. I hired an independent, professional fact-checker who spent about 70 hours going through every sentence and flagging anything she couldn't verify. I then personally got back on the phone with several dozen primary sources to confirm everything they'd told me and re-check anything that wasn't able to be independently fact-checked.

So the book shouldn't hold too many surprises for the people in question. At the same time, I hope the overall book is revelatory. While the observatory is in residents' backyard, many have never visited it before. So even for locals, there should be a lot of new information in the book, especially in how it weaves a lot of seemingly disparate threads, among them astronomers, government spies, neo-Nazis, and a clown doctor named Patch Adams.

Q: You describe Green Bank as a "wonderfully weird place." How do you think the Green Bank you visit five years from now will differ from the Green Bank you first visited in 2017?

A: Five years from now, there will undoubtedly be more WiFi, more smartphones, more wireless technology eroding the notion of a Quiet Zone. The observatory doesn't have the finances, staff, or resolve to crack down on that. Who can stand in the way of the tech revolution?

Green Bank also faces threats from overhead. The Quiet Zone regulations only pertain to terrestrial noise. The observatory can't do anything about satellites, which are a growing concern as Google,



Amazon, and SpaceX launch thousands of low-orbiting satellites that beam broadband internet around the world.

But I'm also hopeful. The media's fascination with Green Bank underscores society's growing nostalgia for a place that's still a bit disconnected. I hope that attention might translate into financial and political support for the Quiet Zone. The observatory also has a new ally in the electrosensitives, who believe Green Bank is one of the last places in the world where they can live free from the pain of cell service and pervasive WiFi. Shouldn't there be one place in the world where they can escape the noise, if not for their health then for the sake of radio astronomy?

COVID school guidelines

Continued from page 1

County Health Department to determine quarantine protocols. Quarantine periods will be determined by the Health Department based on current state guidelines. Vaccinated individuals will not have to quarantine if exposed to someone with COVID-19.

Preventative measures will be in place when school starts. They include:

Hand sanitizing stations in all areas of the school

Sanitizer wipes available in all classrooms and all areas of the school

Air filtration systems in place designed to kill COVID-19 and other air-borne viruses

Routine cleaning of classrooms and buses

Masks will be provided to all students and staff who desire them

COVID-19 quick tests will be available to all students and staff

School-based health centers will be available to diagnose and treat students and staff medical needs

COVID-19 vaccination clinics and booster clinics, if recommended.

"We would like to encourage students to stay home if they are

not feeling well," said Superintendent Sheena VanMeter.

Students experiencing a fever of 100.4 or higher, aches and chills, nausea and/or vomiting, cough or sore throat should stay home from school.

The Health Department and the schools will work together on contact tracing.

Protocols are subject to change, based on the county's transmission levels, the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources, the West Virginia Department of Education and other state and federal guidelines.

COVID update

Continued from page 1

followed the virus to hang around and mutate. Now we have different variants and there will be more."

Ours said he is concerned the positive rate in Hardy County will continue to rise after the start of school and the Labor Day holiday.

The West Virginia Department of Education has issued a School Recovery and Guidance for Fall 2021. In addition to cleaning, disinfecting,

social distancing and contact tracing in collaboration with local health departments, the state has left face covering at the discretion of county boards of education.

Ours said he will give the Hardy County Board of Education the information he has and will recommend students wear masks when returning to the classroom, "even if they are vaccinated. A national poll conducted by the Kaiser Family Foundation found the biggest

concern parents of 12 - 17 year olds have is the fear of the long-term effects of the vaccine. Since the coronavirus vaccines are new, there is no research on the long-term effects.

Ours said people, whether vaccinated or not, should wear a mask when they are indoors in public spaces.

"Getting vaccinated is the most important thing you can do right now to stop the spread of this virus," he said.

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