

BOOK AGAIN

NEWSLETTER

Nov/Dec 2007



Please join us at Book Again as we celebrate the season with our

Christmas Book Sale

One weekend only!

Friday, Saturday & Sunday, December 7th, 8th & 9th!

All books inside the store will be

Half-Off (50% off)

Our already low prices!



Sheryl's News

We want to welcome two new helpers to Book Again. **Diane** (not to be confused with **Diana**) will be working on Thursdays and Fridays. She has been a frequent and faithful customer for years and knows our inventory and our many specials. As a customer she was always helpful to others, and now continues to help in finding a book or suggesting new authors to read.

Sharon will be working with me on Saturdays and she is also a longtime and faithful customer. Sharon loves to be busy and is happy with the hustle of Saturdays, but is never too busy to help you.

Have you noticed the new Leanin' Tree cards? Thanksgiving and Christmas Cards are displayed on our counter – check them out.

And don't forget about our Book Again Gift Certificates! They are a much-appreciated gift.

—Sheryl

BOOK NEWS

By Carol

Fantasticfiction.com is another web site that has been brought to my attention. It is a site for all fiction readers and encompasses all genres of fiction – romance, mystery, science fiction, suspense, fantasy and general. You can access an author by “**Browse Author**” or “**Search Authors**” if you know the name, or by “**Search Book**” if you know the book title or even just the important words in the book title.

If you access by “**Browse Author**”, the listing gives you all authors whose last name begins with whatever letter you click on. It tells you if he/she has a new book out, number of titles published and

genres he/she writes in. Click on the name for a listing of titles.

There are asterisks on the left beside some of the authors. I have not figured out what they mean, and have not found a legend on the site that tells me. If you do, please let me know – thanks)

Then, if you have the time and/or inclination, check out the various sections (like “**Top Authors**” – it lists 250) for some enlightenment.



“The greatest gift is a passion for reading. It is cheap, it consoles, it distracts, it excites, it gives you the knowledge of the world and experience of a wide kind. It is a moral illumination.”—Elizabeth Hardwick

STORE HOURS: Tuesday through Sunday 11 am to 4 pm (Closed Mondays)
5039 Torrance Blvd., Torrance, CA 90503 • (310) 542-1156 • www.bookagain.com

Linda's Cornbread Stuffing

1 pkg (16 oz) cornbread mix
1 stick butter or margarine
1 cup chopped onion

1 cup chopped celery
1 tsp dried sage
1 cup chicken broth

12 oz bulk pork sausage
1 tsp dried thyme
1 cup dried parsley

Make cornbread as directed on package.

Cool slightly and **break** into 1-inch chunks.

Place them on a baking sheet and **bake** for 30 minutes.

Remove from oven and **cool** to room temperature.

Meanwhile, **brown** the sausage and with a slotted spoon, place in large bowl.

Discard all but 2 tablespoons of the drippings, **sauté** the celery and onion until soft.

Stir in the thyme, sage, and parsley.

Stir the cornbread and cooked onion celery mixture into the sausage.

Add the chicken broth and mix well.

Salt & Pepper to taste.

Folklore

by Joe Nolte

As this column encompasses both Thanksgiving and Christmas, it is only appropriate that I reflect on how much I have to be thankful for at this glorious time of year. I have a beautiful brand new baby daughter – Clara – and this happy state of

affairs has infused this holiday season with more meaning than ever before.

I asked Clara what I should write about for her first Christmas, but she was strangely reticent. I took that to mean that

I should find a topic that would be of interest to others, and for some reason my mother came to mind.

Therefore:

THE NUTCRACKER STORY

I've somehow avoided this one in the past – perhaps because the tale is so well known.

I am certain you are all familiar with the story: how E.T.A. Hoffman set about to write a charming little Christmas fairy tale for children back in 1816, and how in 1891 Tchaikovsky was so moved by this wonderful story that he turned it into a ballet, and how that ballet remained one of his favorites and has been a staple of the Christmas season ever since.

I am certain we all know that story, right?

Well, it's all wrong...

First of all, E.T.A. Hoffman (the "A" stands for "Amadeus" by the way, his original name was Ernst Theodor Wilhelm Hoffman – he changed the "Wilhelm" to "Amadeus" in honor of Mozart) was not exactly writing the feel good children's story of the year. His original tale, "The Nutcracker and the Mouse King", was dark and full of betrayal, violence, death and bad things in general. The happy ending (the original tale was NOT a dream) seems almost to have been

tacked on at the behest of a nervous publisher.

It was actually not until 1845 that the version we all know and love came into being, when Alexandre Dumas, author of "The Three Musketeers" and so many other classics, wrote a revised version, which he originally called "The Story of a Hazelnut-Cracker". This version was decidedly more child friendly, and it is this that was adapted in 1891.

Oh, but Tchaikovsky wanted nothing to do with it! He had to be dragged to the task, and only reluctantly agreed to write the thing if they would also allow him to write and be paid for a one act opera he was far more eager to be working on. As it was, he would always claim to have never really liked "Nutcracker", though of course it has, irony of ironies, become his most famous composition of all.

The Nutcracker Ballet did not even become an instant Christmas classic! The Russian critics panned it at the time,

although an abbreviated "Nutcracker Suite" did soon enjoy wide popularity. The actual ballet was not even performed outside of Russia until 1934, and was not performed in the United States until 1944.

And it was still ten more years until, in 1954, George Balanchine produced the New York City Ballet version that, especially when televised a few years later, took the country by a storm, so that of course you cannot now even pretend to muddle through Christmas without stumbling on several different versions of this immortal classic...

And while this is one of Mom's favorite Christmas traditions, I have another reason for warming to the topic this year. Hoffman's protagonist was a young girl named Marie.

Dumas wisely changed her name to the one we all know:

Clara...

Merry Christmas to All!

Joe Nolte