

Spring 2013 Spotlight on Texas Books – Digital cartridge only

Ballad of Gato Guerrero: A Luis Montez Mystery #2 (DT 7047) by Manuel Ramos.

Luis Montez, a Denver attorney perennially on the edge, has been getting his life together. So how did he end up in a ditch, his car twisted and smoking, a gun-wielding giant in a cowboy hat coming toward him? The answer: his friend Feliz "Gato" Guerrero. Trouble has always followed Felix, and it's up to Montez, again, to save him. *Strong language.*

Cotton Bowl Days: Growing Up with Dallas and The Cowboys in the 1960s (DT 6401)

by John Eisenberg. For a young boy growing up in Dallas in the 1960s, the Cowboys football team was a source of excitement and pride - even though the team was still years away from the celebrity of the Super Bowl era. Eisenberg, a third-generation Dallasite and life-long Cowboys fan, presents a nostalgic look at growing up with his city as it tried to cast off the dark shadow of the Kennedy assassination and with his team, a magnet for civic pride even in defeat.

Death Books a Return: A Scrappy Librarian Mystery (DT 7061) by Marion Moore Hill.

Juanita Wills, public librarian of Wyndham, Oklahoma, is researching for a local history when she comes across the 1959 unsolved murder of a black high school student on the then all-white high-school track. At first, determined to atone for the shameful failure of the local police to investigate the crime, she quickly discovers that her questions threaten a killer – or killers – still hiding within her beloved community. *Strong language.*

Harpsong (DT 7069) by Rilla Askew. The author mixes fiction with legend and history in this novel of Oklahoma during the Great Depression. Harmonica-playing Harlan Singer marries 14-year-old Sharon Thompson, and they immediately take to riding the rails. Unlike many Okies, they never go to California but instead keep making figure eights, always returning to Oklahoma. Sometimes they steal, but only needed food and clothing, and they always try to repay their debts. This is a vivid portrait of an age and a place, of desperate poverty, near starvation, red dust, and strong biblical faith. *Some strong language.*

Life of the Marlows: A True Story of Frontier Life of Early Days (DT 7044) by

William Rathmell. The story of the five Marlow brothers and their tribulations in late nineteenth century Texas is the stuff of Old West legend. Violent, full of intrigue, their story was first related by Rathmell in a book published in 1892, shortly after the events it described in Young County, Texas. Boone, the most reckless of the brothers, shot and killed a popular sheriff and escaped, only to be murdered later by bounty hunters. The remaining brothers were jailed, escaped, were recaptured, and were attacked by a mob that killed two of the remaining brothers. *Some strong language.*

Lone Star Lonely Hearts Club: A Debutante Dropout Mystery (DT 6971) by Susan McBride. Wealthy Texas widows need loving too which is why Bebe Kent joined a dating service for “discriminating” seniors soon after relocating to the swanky Belle Meade retirement community. Unfortunately, Bebe didn’t live long enough to meet “Mr. Right.” And though doctors declared her death totally natural, extravagant blue-blooded Dallas socialite Cissy Blevins Kendricks believes her old friend’s demise was hastened and she’s ready to check herself into Belle Meade incognito to prove it. Cissy’s rebellious, sometime-sleuthing daughter, Andrea, has no choice but to join her mom in search of the truth – especially when more well-heeled widows start turning up dead.

The Meaning of Nolan Ryan (DT 6851) by Nick Trujillo. Baseball pitcher Nolan Ryan retired after the 1993 season. His legacy is unmatched: 300 wins, 5,000 strikeouts, and a 27-year career throwing 90-miles-per-hour fastballs. No other pitcher in major-league history can boast a comparable record. Trujillo, a communications professor and former college pitcher, examines Ryan’s impact on baseball and society as a hero and role model. For many years, Ryan pitched in relative obscurity, registering consistent but unspectacular numbers and playing for mediocre teams. Only in his last 10 years did the country take note of his career. Ryan is self-effacing, humble, hardworking, conservative, happily married, and an off-season rancher. Trujillo examines Madison Avenue’s use of those traits and how Ryan became just another image rather than the hero he should have been.

Precious Dust (DT 5918) by Paula Mitchell Marks. From the outbreak of gold fever in California in 1848 to the mad rush to Alaska at the nineteenth century’s close, this is the aspiring miners’ story. Historian Paula Mitchell Marks focuses on what propelled Americans and foreigners to the gold fields, how they endured the journey and the search, what kept them going or separated them from their dreams, and what sense they made of the whole experience. She also explains how the rushes hastened the development of the western regions and served as a “safety valve” for restless dreamers who wanted to reassert their individuality (both personal and economic) as the industrial age engulfed them.

Red, White & Blue Murder (DT 7032) by Bill Crider. County commissioners in Texas wield extraordinary influence, controlling the purse strings for all roads and public works. Even in rural Blacklin County, that's serious money. Grat Bilson was a county commissioner, at least until someone whacked him over the head and set him on fire in his isolated hunting cabin. *Some strong language.*

Threading the Needle (DT 6983) by Clay Reynolds. This novel pays tribute to the legacy of James Dean and the glory days of drag racing, telling the story of a North Texas racer whose legend dominates a small town in the post-WWII era. This is a chilling story of Faustian bargains, drag racing, rock and roll, and a sister’s love for a brother who died tragically young. *Some strong language.*