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*Ottawa Outlook, nee North Hero News and World Review …. ……. Mostly stuff no one else would print.*

Friday, September 17, 2010 c:/nhn&wr10, 10wc25

(2010 NHN&WR letter/story/poem/card #15)

**Hold That Book!**

We have excellent libraries here in Ottawa.. One reader service is the ability to put a ‘hold’ on a book. As soon as the book is available you are notified by phone to come in and pick it up. The same notification information is available on the Library’s website. How wonderful we thought. See or hear about a book we’d be interested in, just key in a request to have it held. Held books ready for pickup are in a special section shelved by the first four letters of ones last name. This has involved a slight problem for your writers. They are not the only ‘JEFF’ using this facility at our branch. Best to know what book you are going to pick up!

We have reserved books many, many times. One problem, … every one in Ottawa seems to want to read the same books we do, Case in point. The resident mystery aficionado has a hold on *“The Girl Who Kicked the Hornets Nest”* by Stieg Larsson. Her position on the ‘List’? A tidy 568, … i.e. after 567 people have read it, Lucile gets the book. This is only the surface of the iceberg. Once one is notified, they have 5 days to pick the book up and then 3 weeks to read it. Thus, one reader can tie up a book for 4 weeks. (Held books are not renewable.)

Calculation: 567 x 4 = 2268, divided by 52 = ‘s about 43 ½ years. Good Grief, … Lucile will be almost 60! Hold on though just a moment, … that’s the worse case scenario, where there is only one book available. There are 33 branches, if each branch has a *“The Girl Who Kicked the Hornets Nest”* that should cut the our wait to about a year and a half. But that we kind of doubt.

The resident non-mystery aficionado sort of chuckles quietly about this ‘Hold’ situation. Or would “Hold-up” situation be more apt?. Since the author of any fiction he reads has probably been dead at least 150 years he thought he was quite safe in his chuckling. And chuckle he did over Lucile’s recent *“Days of Our Lives”* wait, lasted 5 months and believe it or not, she was #1 on the list. Book was notated as *“On Order”.* Go figure.

Ah, … but the Chuckler has had his come-uppance. Upon hearing that Stephen Hawking had a new book, *“Grand Design*” about to come out, a hold request was entered. OK, … not even in the bookstores yet, … position on the list, 68. Good Grief. Eventually our ‘Hold’ endeavors lead to happy reading so we shall continue to avail ourselves of the facility. We’ve currently 23 books on ‘Hold’, and after an initial dry spell they sort of come along a few a week. We prefer a book to Television, two to one. Have you read any good books lately?

Till next month, Lucile (mysteries), Bailey (non-reader), Ken (Non-fiction).

Ottawa

Re. dist (100)

(Update. Letter written 9/17, today is 9/30.

*Hornets Nest* # now 480, gain 88. *Design* # 30, gain 38.)