

## BOOK BREAK

## Local authors give summer reading tips



VICTORIA DIAZ

Packing or planning for that vacation trip soon? Don't forget to include a good book to add to your well-deserved fun. Here, area writers (who should know good writing) make some suggestions as to what you should take along:

■ **Kathe Koja, Berkley** ("Strange Angels") This superlative author of tales of terror recommends "Street," by Jack Cady, a contemporary thriller which easily transcends the genre. In it, a serial killer snuffs out prostitutes, and some homeless individuals take it upon themselves to find the monster responsible for the murders. "It's a powerful story about the decline of morality," says Koja, who also recommends Cady's 1994 short story collection, "Sons of Noah," and "anything by Cormac McCarthy."

■ **Ingrid Tomey, West Bloomfield** ("Savage Carrot") Young Adult novelist Tomey sees E. Annie Proulx's "The Shipping News" as one of the best novels she's read recently. First published in 1993, the highly acclaimed tale tells the story of a 36-year-old newspaper-

man who travels to Newfoundland to start a new life. The tragicomic romance won the 1994 Pulitzer Prize for Fiction. "Her use of the language reminds me of James Joyce, and her scenes just blaze," says Tomey. "I'm also fascinated by how she writes so convincingly in a man's voice. She seems to really get inside a man's soul and mind." Another Tomey favorite: writer Tobias Wolff's memoirs, "This Boy's Life."

■ **Linda Bartell, Troy** ("Tender Rogue") Tami Hoag's romantic suspense novel, "Still Waters," would make for great summer reading, says historical romance writer Bartell. The cast of characters includes an ex-football player who retires to become a small-town sheriff, and a woman whose reputation has been wrongly besmirched. Add a mysterious murder, and an Amish backdrop. "I'd never read any of Tami Hoag's books before this one," says Bartell. "But I intend to read them now." Other titles by Hoag include "Cry Wolf" and "Dark Paradise."

■ **Doug Allyn, Montrose** ("Icewater Mansions") The Edgar Award-winning mystery author suggests Elmore Leonard's latest crackling thriller, "Riding the Rap." "I thought 'Pronto' was good," says Allyn. "This is better.

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*Ingrid Tomey  
West Bloomfield*

Leonard just smokes here. He's in top form." If you want more of Leonard, Allyn suggests "Get Shorty," his personal favorite. A story about a loan shark who makes it big as a Hollywood screenwriter, Allyn calls it "a great story." Be ready for a knock-out ending, he advises.

■ **Tom Kakonis, Grand Rapids** ("Shadow Counter") crime novelist Kakonis suggests Lee Goldberg's debut novel, "My Gun Has Bullets," especially if you're looking for a murder mystery with a funny bone. The tale, a send-up of a television show set in La-La Land makes him laugh just thinking about it, says Kakonis. Goldberg is a veteran

television writer.

■ **Barbara Burgess, Lapeer** ("The Fred Field") Burgess, a Young Adult novelist, was more than eager to recommend Carol Shields rather off-beat novel, "The Stone Diaries," first published in 1986 and now in paperback. "It's about a woman who witnesses her own birth, childhood, marriage, motherhood, work, and death," says Burgess, who calls it "extremely powerful."

■ **Thomas Lynch, Milford** ("Grimalkin and Other Poems") This gifted Michigan poet likes Keith Taylor's short story collection, "Life Science." Taylor, an Ann Arbor writer, sets many of these stories in Michigan. If you haven't already done so, here's your chance to get acquainted with yet another area writer. Speaking of Michigan writers, Lynch also highly recommends Jim Harrison's "Julip."

Victoria Diaz of Livonia, a longtime member of Detroit Women Writers, has a lifelong interest in reading "everything from great novels to cereal boxes." You can leave a message for her on a Touch-Tone phone by dialing 953-2047, then her mailbox number 1854.

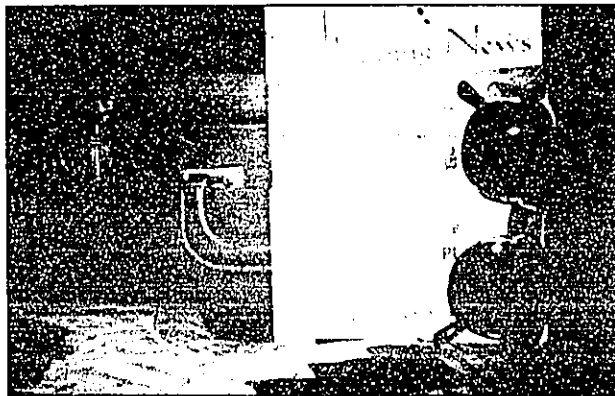
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Take it along: E. Annie Proulx's Pulitzer Prize-winning "The Shipping News" is one of the books local authors recommend for vacation reading.

## West Bloomfield artist signs books

West Bloomfield artist Chris Unwin, author of "The Artistic Touch," will have a book signing noon to 2 p.m. Saturday, at the Doubleday store at the Somerset Collection, Big Beaver Road and Coolidge, Troy.

Watercolorists Bill Borden, Donna Vogelheim, Gwen Tomkin, Lil Langerman, Karen Van Gamper, Lily Dudgeon and Susan Vitelli will make a special appearance.