

Fans eagerly await last Harry Potter book

By Rachel Young
Northwest Guardian

Muggles everywhere are highly anticipating the Saturday release of the latest, and last, book in the Harry Potter series: "Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows." And Fort Lewis is not immune to Harry Potter fever, either.

Inquiries about the seventh installment began to reach Georgia Cartner, children's specialist at Fort Lewis' Bookpatch Library, in January. She has even had requests to get the book early.

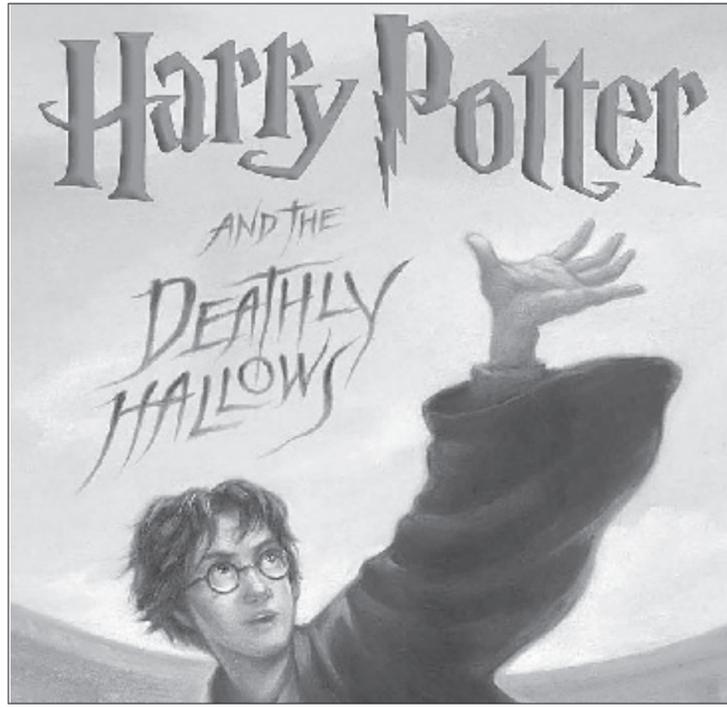
"The book has 26 holds on it already," she said. "And the sound recording has 14 holds."

The Fort Lewis library system will have seven copies of the book and two sound recordings, but Cartner said more may be ordered if demand remains high, which she thinks it will.

Cartner herself has been a huge fan of the series since the first book, "Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone," released in 1998.

"I bought that book and, I tell you what, I read that thing and I was hooked," Cartner said. Her son, who is now 14, grew up with the Harry Potter series. Cartner read the first five books aloud to her son, starting when he was in the first grade.

She thinks the popularity of the series is due, in large part, to the depth of the characters. Young readers can relate to the characters because they grow in a realistic manner, she said. But adults



love the books as much as young people do because they can also relate, Cartner said.

"I think it's the human element, it's that good versus evil, and we want the

good guys to win," Cartner said. And the books are just reminiscent enough of everyone's childhood, that adults can relate to Harry Potter, who often feels different and confused.

Where to find it

- The Fort Lewis PX will have 1,340 copies of the book and McChord's BX will have 500 to sell beginning just after midnight Saturday.

- Barnes and Noble in Lakewood will host a Midnight Magic Party beginning at 7 p.m. July 20 and begin selling books at midnight. A spokesperson declined to disclose the number of books the store will have.

- Borders in Olympia will host a Grand Hallows Ball beginning at 9:30 p.m. and begin selling books just after midnight. Felicia Nasco, inventory supervisor, declined to disclose the number of books the store will have.

The last book in the Harry Potter series leaves a void to be filled by the next big children's author, and replacing Harry Potter is a tall order, Cartner said.

"It has brought an element of surprise and fantasy that was rapidly dying," Cartner said of the series. Children were not reading the classics anymore, she said. "They wanted something more exciting," she said. And Harry Potter has delivered what children were looking for and got them to read.

Fort Lewis and McChord Exchanges are just as prepared for the release as the library.

"When (the books) do come in, they will be treated in the same regard as two carat diamond rings to us," said Patrick McGhee, general manager of the Fort Lewis and McChord Exchanges.

The books will arrive at an undisclosed time to a secure location, where a loss-prevention detail will count the books to verify that exactly 1,340 books arrived — no more, no less. Then they will be stored in a vault under lock and key until midnight on the 21st, McGhee said.

For those who want to buy the book and cannot wait until the sun rises Saturday morning to get their hands on it, Fort Lewis' PX and McChord's BX will open one minute after midnight Saturday and sell the books exclusively. Fort Lewis will open for two hours and McChord for one. All authorized AAFES shoppers are welcome to attend, McGhee said.

"People can start lining up way before," McGhee said. "We'll have the stanchions set up, so you can camp out if you want to."

The books will be sold one per ID card holder to be sure that there are enough copies for everyone.

"I think we're going to sell out Saturday night," McGhee said. Once the first shipment is gone, McGhee does not know when he will get another shipment. "It's safe to assume it could be weeks before you would see another book," he said.

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Families will hunt magic suitcases around Fort Lewis

By Andrea Hauser Chapman
Northwest Guardian

Fort Lewis families can enjoy a unique scavenger hunt — right on post — in search of "magic suitcases."

The suitcases are works of art created by students in the SKIES Unlimited (Schools of Knowledge, Inspiration, Exploration and Skills) program on post. Each suitcase has a unique story explaining where its imaginary travels have taken it, and each will be located around Fort Lewis, waiting to be found. "One of the universal tools of travel is a suitcase," said Cindy Arnold, SKIES coordinator. "From out of a suitcase come things, clues, that help people share stories."

Arnold worked with several groups of children, from toddlers to pre-teens, to decorate the suitcases and create

the stories that accompany them. The project is being coordinated with student groups along the I-5 corridor.

This is the first year the magic suitcases have been brought to Fort Lewis, and Arnold said the biggest challenge has been finding enough to decorate. The children's creativity, on the other hand, has been boundless.

"I think one of those suitcases traveled to Africa, and in Africa they saw dinosaurs eating grapes," she said. "One suitcase traveled to Iraq to visit Soldiers. ... The concept or idea of a magic suitcase, it almost translates into an archetype of imagination. Students really respond to the idea of a suitcase being magic."

Shawn West worked on the magic suitcases with her toddler class at the

Magic Suitcases Scavenger Hunt Clues

1. A place you can go when you are thirsty or hungry.
2. A place to go when you want to take a SKIES Unlimited class and CYS class.
3. A place where you can move on wheels to music.
4. A place where you can learn and read a lot!
5. A place where you wear funny shoes and roll round things.
6. A terrific place to go when you and your family want to get fit.

Courtesy of Cindy Arnold, SKIES Unlimited

Madigan Child Development Center. While the 3- and 4-year-old children might not have grasped the full concept, West said they had a lot of fun working on flowers and buttons for the suitcases.

"I think that they really enjoyed it, and if we can do it again, that would be great," she said. "We'd like

to do it again."

Arnold hopes to have between seven and 10 suitcases on display around post. Families can look for the suitcases, write or draw the location of each and drop the list off in the Book Patch Library by July 30.

A drawing for a small prize will be held during a free family party from

2-3 p.m. on Aug. 3 at the Book Patch Library. Arnold said the event also will include storytelling and other activities for families to enjoy.

As more suitcases are completed, Arnold said she has been impressed by the children's storytelling, as well as the community support the project has received.

"It's been quite a wonderful experience in that people are excited about the idea," she said. "It's an art experience for students, a creative writing story project for students, an art exhibit for the community, as well as quality time for parents to spend with their children."

"We're hoping to do this again next summer."

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