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Off the Shelf:

An e-mail newsletter from the Prince William Public Library System

February 1, 2009  
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**Hooray for Hollywood!**

The 81st annual Academy Awards ceremony, hosted by Hugh Jackman, is scheduled for February 22, 2009 (<http://www.oscar.com/>). To find out who has been nominated, visit: <http://www.oscar.com/nominees/>. Did you know that a guest ticket to the first awards banquet cost \$5, that Bob Hope was the master of ceremonies for the first televised event in 1953, or that the ceremony has only been delayed three times in its history? To learn more about the history of the Oscars, visit: <http://www.oscars.org/awards/academyawards/about/history.html>.

In the January 5, 2005 issue of *Daily Variety*, the article "Staring into the Crystal Globe" claimed that the Golden Globe awards (<http://www.goldenglobes.org/>) often predict the winners of the Academy Awards. The magazine found that throughout the history of the two awards, the Golden Globe winner for best picture went on to win the Oscar 77% of the time, for best actor 72% of the time, and for best actress 66% of the time. If you'd like to read the full article, go to <http://www.pwcgov.org/library/electronicresources/index.htm>, click on the link for General Reference Center Gold, enter your library card number to log on, and then search for the title of the article.

Do you know which 1980s television shows featured Brad Pitt as a guest star? Want a complete list of Heath Ledger's movies? Want to know what other awards *Slumdog Millionaire* has already won? Answers to all of these questions and much more can be found on the Internet Movie Database (<http://www.imdb.com/>). The IMDb started as a hobby project in 1990 and since then has grown into a massive database containing over one million motion picture and television titles and nearly three million people, from actors and directors to stuntmen and set decorators. The IMDb is one of the most comprehensive and authoritative entertainment sites on the Internet (<http://www.laweekly.com/2004-08-05/news/do-you-imdb/1>).

To keep up with information about your favorite TV shows and actors, visit *TV Guide's* web site (<http://www.tvguide.com/>). In addition to TV schedules, this site provides plenty of celebrity news, photos, and show recaps. *Entertainment Weekly* (<http://www.ew.com/ew>) not only covers television and movies, it also provides music headlines and reviews, DVD information, and even a section on books. In fact, *Entertainment Weekly* provided the complete text of the first four chapters of John Grisham's latest book, *The Associate*, prior to its publication date in January (<http://www.ew.com/ew/article/0,,20250355,00.html>).

Whether you go to your local cinema, rent from Blockbuster (<http://www.blockbuster.com/>), have a Netflix subscription (<http://www.netflix.com/>), or check out DVDs from the Library, the Rotten Tomatoes web site can help you find movies of interest and avoid the worst of the worst. (<http://www.rottentomatoes.com/>) This site collects reviews from a variety of respected sources and averages them into a single score. You can also watch movie trailers and clips, view celebrity pictures, and read the latest Hollywood news.

The Library System owns many books about Hollywood and the motion picture industry. Here are a few to get you started:

*The Academy Awards: the complete unofficial history* by Gail Kinn (791.43079 Kin)

*Made for each other: fashion and the Academy Awards* by Bronwyn Cosgrave (391.04 Cos)

Leonard Maltin's movie guide by Leonard Maltin (791.4375 Leo)

Vanity Fair's tales of Hollywood: rebels, reds, and graduates and the wild stories behind the making of 13 iconic films edited by Graydon Carter (791.43 Van)

The full burn: on the set, at the bar, behind the wheel, and over the edge with Hollywood stuntmen by Kevin Conley (791.43028 Con)

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**IN THE SPOTLIGHT: Short Stories for A Short Month**

If you don't have time to tackle the 677 pages of Nelson DeMille's *The Gate House* or Wally Lamb's 740 page book *The Hour I First Believed*, perhaps a collection of short stories is what you need. Every word counts in a short story, so authors must use great care and skill to create a realistic character and tell an interesting story in a few dozen pages or less. If you like classic authors, try *The Short Stories* by Ernest Hemingway, *The Fall of the House of Usher and other tales* by Edgar Allan Poe, *The Best Short Stories of O. Henry*, *The Short Stories of F. Scott Fitzgerald*, or *The Collected Short Stories of Louis L'Amour*.

Whether you want a collection of stories by the same author or an anthology containing stories by many different authors, the Library System has much to offer. *The Best American Short Stories* (813.0108 Bes) and *The Best American Mystery Stories* (M Best) are published annually and provide a variety of stories from both established and new authors. If you like mysteries, try the series of books produced by the Mystery Writers of America: *Show Business is Murder*, *Death Do Us Part*, and *The Blue Religion* (M Mystery). Several of the James Bond movies are based on Ian Fleming's short stories. *Quantum of Solace: 007, the Complete James Bond Short Stories* (FIC Fleming) by Ian Fleming contains "For your eyes only," "From a View to a Kill" and several others. Classic horror stories can be found in the two volumes of *Classic Tales of Horror* (808.838738 Cla). *Blood Lite: an Anthology of Humorous Horror Stories* (FIC Horror) includes tales by popular authors Charlaine Harris, Sherrilyn Kenyon, and Jim Butcher. Fans of science fiction should check out *The World Turned Upside Down* (SFIC World) or browse the science fiction sections for story collections by Ray Bradbury, Orson Scott Card, Keith Laumer, and Robert Silverberg.

Many novelists also enjoy writing short fiction. Within the last year, Stephen King (*Just After Sunset*), Laura Lippman (*Hardly Knew Her*), Louise Erdrich (*The Red Convertible*), Elizabeth Berg (*The Day I Ate Whatever I Wanted*), and Annie Proulx (*Fine Just the Way It Is*) have all published collections of short stories. Give short stories a try this month and discover if it's true that good things come in small packages.

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