

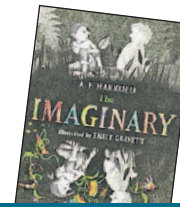
# BOOKS

## HOT PAGES

Check out the Publishers Weekly list of best-sellers. **Online only**

## BOOKWORM SEZ

Normally a good thing, imagination conjures some scary scenarios in this book. **Online only**



QUESTIONS? Gwenn Friss, editor | 508-862-1155 | gfriss@capecodonline.com | fax: 508-771-3292

## BOOKSHELF

### Author news

Sarah Anne Johnson will speak about her new book, "The Light-keeper's Wife," 2 p.m., Tuesday, Chase Free Library, 7 Route 28, West Harwich.

### Tales of suspense

Hyannis native and author Casey Sherman will perform for an evening of harrowing tales captured in a series of his bestselling books including "The Finest Hours," a white-knuckle page-turner about a dramatic 1952 Coast Guard rescue off Chatham, which Walt Disney Pictures is bringing to the big screen next fall starring Chris Pine, Casey Affleck, Eric Bana and Ben Foster. The production crew filmed on location in Chatham in December. Sherman's latest book, "Boston Strong: A City's Triumph over Tragedy," co-authored by Dave Wedge, is also being turned into a movie for 20th Century FOX. Sherman is also the author of "Animal: The Bloody Rise and Fall of the Mob's Most Feared Assassin, about infamous mafia hit-man Joe "The Animal" Barboza (once jailed at the Barnstable House of Correction) and "Search for the Strangler," about Sherman's re-investigation of the murder of his aunt Mary Sullivan (a 1962 graduate of Barnstable High School) at the hands of the infamous Boston Strangler. Saturday's free event, hosted by Books by the Sea, is at 7:30 p.m. at the Cultural Center of Cape Cod, 307 Old Main St., South Yarmouth, cultural-center.org.

### Irish women in lit

Through Irish texts in mythology, fiction, biography, and short stories, Mary Ann Eaton explores "The Portrayal of Women in Irish Literature" in an 8-week class that looks at the strength and determination of Irish women through the centuries. The session, at \$85, meets from 3 to 5 p.m. Wednesdays, starting March 25 and concluding May 13. It will meet at the Cultural Center of Cape Cod, 307 Old Main St., South Yarmouth. 508-394-7100. www.cultural-center.org. Call to register and receive a book list and syllabus. Eaton has a BA in English and has studied at University College Cork, Cork City, Ireland, where she concentrated on Irish and Celtic literature.

### Publish an eBook

"You've Always Wanted To Publish A Book. Now You Can!" is an hour-long presentation designed for writers, artists and others to learn about creating eBooks, print-on-demand paperbacks and short runs. Presenter Laura Shabott is the author of "Confessions of an eBook Virgin: What Everyone should Know Before they Publish on the Internet," a primer for aspiring self-publishers. The free session is at 10 a.m. March 24 at the Eldredge Public Library, 564 Main St., Chatham, 508-945-5170.

### Review

"Season of Fear" by Brian Freeman; Quercus (448 pages, \$26.99) Politics seems to seep into every action in "Season of Fear" — whether it's a relaxing day at the beach or a simple meal in this well-plotted first of a planned series by Edgar Award finalist Brian Freeman.

Ignore the rather shaky prologue during which Birch Fairmont, a congressional candidate from the newly formed Common Way Party, and two others are assassinated, a decade ago during a political fund-raiser in Lake Wales. "Season of Fear" soon kicks into high gear as it combines the police procedural with the political thriller, never neglecting the tenets of each while exploring the best of both categories of mystery fiction. A lot has happened during the past 10 years. Yet, those murders remain unsolved. Cab Bolton is allowed a brief leave from his job as a police detective in Naples, Fla., when he's hired to find out if those killings could be related to the threats Diane has been receiving. Freeman enthusiastically delves into the machinations of Florida politics with realistic behind-the-scenes details. The tightly coiled plot erupts in several directions, each plausible and believable to anyone the least bit familiar with Florida politics. Tampa's byways, landmarks and restaurants shine as "Season of Fear" showcases Florida's west coast. — *Oline H. Cogdill, Sun Sentinel (TNS)*

## BOOKS

# An email from his mother saved his life

In S.O.B.E.R.\*, Cape mother and son tell story of addiction and recovery

By K.C. Myers  
kcm Myers@capecodonline.com

Every parent wonders what happens when their child leaves the nest for college or elsewhere.

But few could prepare for what Anita Baglaneas Devlin faced when she ventured to her son's off-campus apartment at the University of Vermont in 2011. She had just sent her son, Michael Devlin Jr., a 2007 Barnstable High School graduate, to a treatment center due to his opiate pill and heroin addiction.

Even though he'd been visibly spiraling downward for some time, Devlin had no clue exactly what was going on until she saw how he lived.

"I could taste the vomit climbing in my throat as my head started to spin...the most courageous mother moments of my life did not come close to what I had in front of me in that dark, dreary hallway of this house in Vermont," writes Anita, in her and her son, Mike's, co-authored memoir, S.O.B.E.R.\* (The asterisk in the title distinguishes the book from one with a similar name.)

The title is an acronym invented by Mike's mentor, Chico, at his Texas sober home. It stands for "son-of-a-bitch, everything's real."

The name fits the realization that hit Anita, a long-time former resident of Centerville.

"I realized everything he'd been saying had been a lie," she said, in a phone interview from her new home in Manhattan.

"The room was foreign; there was nothing familiar," she continued. "It looked like a drug den. There was drug paraphernalia everywhere. It looked like someone very angry lived there."

The book, which mother and son did as a family project and self-published, tells the story from two perspectives. There is the mother, consumed with worry, shame and anger for her son's destructive, rude, selfish and dangerous behavior.

Then there is Mike himself, who pulls back the curtain on his formerly



Michael Devlin Jr, left, with his sister, Alex Devlin, his dad, Michael Devlin, and his mother, Anita Baglaneas Devlin, right, wrote S.O.B.E.R.\* as a mother-and-son project, giving a glimpse into how Michael's addiction affected each of them. ALEX DEVLIN PHOTO.

### For more information:

- Anita Baglaneas Devlin's website: <http://www.anitadevlin.com/>
- S.O.B.E.R.\* is available on Amazon.
- Anita and Mike are also featured on Caron's website: <http://www.caron.org/anita-mike>
- Read more about the epidemic of opiate addiction on Cape Cod at [www.capecod-times.com/pillsthatkill](http://www.capecod-times.com/pillsthatkill).



Anita Baglaneas Devlin. ALEX DEVLIN PHOTO.

secret life. And perhaps most importantly, Mike relays how he saved himself.

The Baglaneas family goes back generations in Barnstable. Anita's grandfather owned the Mayflower Diner on Main Street in Hyannis. Anita and her husband, Michael, raised their family in Centerville from 1996 to 2009. Mike played lacrosse for Barnstable High School.

A sports injury started him using pain medication during his freshman year.

When older students noticed his arm in a sling, they asked if he had opiate painkillers. He did.

"And I loved the feeling," he said. "I didn't get into pills then. It was a progression. I didn't do them day to day."

"My junior year I had another surgery and then in senior year, we had a friend who was stealing them from CVS. I hurt my back right before senior year. When I took them, I felt motivated, not tired. I wanted to talk and

be everyone's best friend."

In Vermont, Mike tried to get clean on his own.

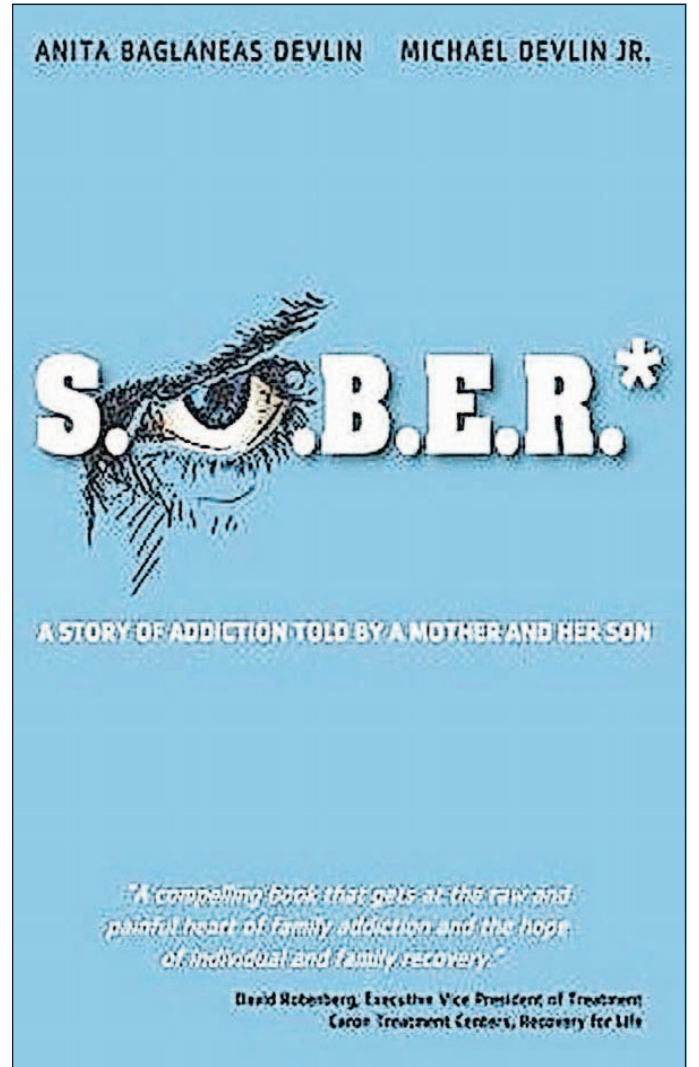
"I had friends who drank too much and had a consequence severe enough to stop," Mike said. "Anytime I had a severe consequence I vowed to stop but I had something different, more mental and emotional, where it was more my solution than theirs."

Facing a hostile mob of dealers and others he owed money to, Mike ended up in a hotel room in Vermont, contemplating suicide.

An email from his mother saved his life.

Mike entered Caron Pennsylvania, a treatment center. It cost the family \$30,000 and insurance covered about \$3,000, Anita said.

He then went to a sober home, the Gaston Transitional Sober Living House, in Dallas, in Texas, where he still remains today, though now he's the recreation-and-recovery coordinator, not a patient.



Mike is able to write eloquently about his mental transformation.

"Insecurities, low self-esteem, self-consciousness, no self-worth! A whole lot of self," Mike wrote in the beginning of the book. "This is what I had concerned myself with my entire life... I had always felt lower than others, like I had something to prove to them."

Once clean, he had to remember how his mind works.

"Just because I wasn't doing drugs anymore didn't mean I was an expert at dealing with my feelings," Mike wrote. "...I was afraid to look like a coward so I continued to keep my feelings inside... But I have to continuously remember that it's not my actions that are my problem. It is my mind that needs healing. Everything else comes later."

He writes about the threat of relapse.

"Even though relapse is never out of the question for me, or anyone like me, that is not my greatest fear

in this life," Mike wrote. "It is the in-between point that leads to relapse, or perhaps even death. My mind is my problem, and drugs and alcohol were the solution that helped me to feel OK."

Anita also brings lessons learned from her own healing.

"I've learned that the most important thing family members can do while we are waiting for the addict to want the help is to help ourselves," she wrote "If we do not understand what addiction is, we cannot help our children."

Anita wrote that shame held her back when she first thought of doing a book.

"I felt ashamed at times but realized that the only thing I should have felt shame for was ignoring all the signs years ago," she wrote. "I should have been ashamed of myself for worrying about what other people would think instead of helping my only son."

— Follow K.C. Myers on Twitter: [kcm Myerssect](#).

## REVIEW

# 'The Forgotten Women' is a look at 40 famous spouses

By Katie Foran-McHale  
Tribune News Service

"Behind Every Great Man: The Forgotten Women Behind the World's Famous and Infamous" by Marlene Wagman-Geller; Sourcebooks (368 pages, \$16.99)

Last Sunday was International Women's Day, and a viral video from the Bill, Hillary and Chelsea Clinton Foundation gave the message "we're not there yet," meaning we've got a long way to go before the end of the discrimination and oppression of women.

This is the sentiment inspired by Marlene Wagman-Geller's "Behind Every Great Man: The Forgotten Women Behind the World's Famous and Infamous," a well-crafted exploration into the lives of 40 women who

were coupled with some of history and pop culture's most prominent.

The majority of these women did not have happy lives. Though the book provides exceptions (Jackie and Rachel Robinson and Douglas and Jean MacArthur stick out as relatively happy couples compared to the rest, though clearly they had their own battles), the majority of these men either were extensively unfaithful to their partners, abandoned their partners and/or children in times of need (Of Alfred Hitchcock and his wife Alma's first and only child being born: "He was absent during the delivery, explaining he could not bear the suspense.") or both.

Or worse. Francoise Gilot, Pablo Picasso's longtime girlfriend, decided to leave him after

his public affairs and private verbal abuse, and he responded by blacklisting her in the art world and cut off all contact with her and their children for the rest of his life.

After Mahatma Gandhi's wife, Kasturba, picked up the same scarce dietary habits at home as he did while imprisoned, he wrote "I am not in a position to come and nurse you. If it is destined that you should die, I think it is preferable that you should go before me."

In a drunken, jealous rage, F. Scott Fitzgerald pointed a gun at girlfriend Sheilah (her response: "Take it and shoot yourself, you son of a b—"). I didn't pull myself out of the gutter to waste my life on a drunk like you."

The list goes on. But while much of the book resonates with the wide range of horrors these women

went through at the hands of their lovers, its focus is their own strength and power that inspired change to the world.

Alma Hitchcock suggested, against her husband's wishes, that Janet Leigh perish in the first third of "Psycho," and that the infamous shower scene include music (Alfred wanted silence).

Gala Dali often dictated what her painter husband Salvador should paint.

Although she never received credit, Mileva Einstein collaborated with husband Albert on the theory of relativity.

That list goes on, too.

At times the cheekiness of the commentary can be a bit off-putting (Of Albert and Mileva Einstein's relationship: "It was not love at first sight, but it was a meeting of minds — akin to E meeting mc2."). And in the chapter on Pamela Courson, girlfriend of

The Doors' Jim Morrison, the author refers to the couples that are interred in the eerily romantic Pere Lachaise in Paris, including Abelard and Heloise, Gertrude Stein and Alice B. Toklas (the one lesbian couple featured in the book) and Simone de Beauvoir and Jean-Paul Sartre — "The last of which is false; they are buried side by side at Montparnasse.

These distractions aside, the book's easily digestible format of short chapters noting the highs and lows of these women's lives is attention-grabbing and enlightening, proving that although we might not know their stories, we should.

In the issue of gender equality, we may not be there yet, as Sunday's video reminds us. But giving a voice to women like these is a vital step.