



Wilkes Reads Together

Date: Thursday, October 21, 2010

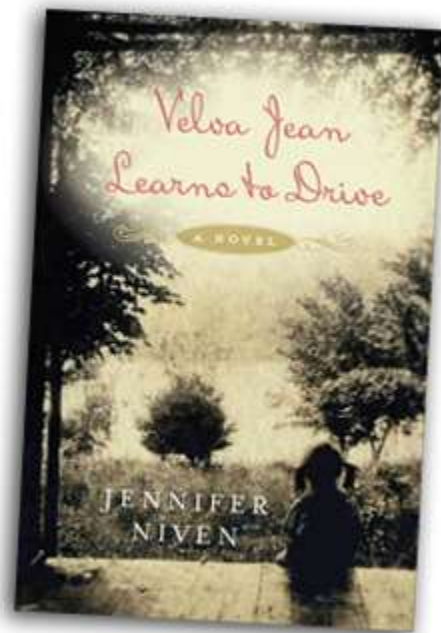
Time: 2 pm and 6 pm

About the Book

Set in Appalachia in the years before World War II, *Velva Jean Learns to Drive* is a poignant story of a spirited young girl growing up in the gold-mining and moonshining South. Before she dies, Velva Jean's mother urges her to "live out there in the great wide



world." Velva Jean dreams of becoming a big-time singer in Nashville until she falls in love with Harley Bright, a handsome juvenile delinquent turned revival preacher. As their tumultuous love story unfolds, Velva Jean must choose between keeping her hard-won home and pursuing her dream of singing in the Grand Ole Opry.



About the Author

Jennifer Niven's third book and first novel, *Velva Jean Learns to Drive* (based on the Emmy Award-winning film of the same name), was released in July 2009 by Penguin-Plume, and is already in its fourth printing. It was the Costco Book of the Month for August 2009, and *Publishers Weekly* (in a starred

review) called it “a touching read, funny and wise, like a crazy blend of Loretta Lynn, Dolly Parton, a less morose Flannery O'Connor and maybe a shot of Hank Williams.”

Her fourth book, a memoir – *The Aqua-Net Diaries: Big Hair, Big Dreams, Small Town* – was released in February 2010 by Gallery Books, a division of Simon & Schuster, and has been optioned by Warner Brothers as a television series (which Jennifer is writing) and is being produced by Charlie Sheen’s company. Jennifer is currently working on her fifth book, the sequel to her novel: *Velva Jean Learns to Fly*.

Other books include *The Ice Master*, released in November 2000 and named one of the top ten nonfiction books of the year by *Entertainment Weekly*, and *Ada Blackjack*, a Book Sense Top Ten Pick.

A Barnes & Noble Discover Great New Writer, Jennifer Niven has ten different publishers in ten separate countries. Her work has been translated into eight languages, including German, French, Italian, Portuguese, Chinese, Danish, and Icelandic.

With her mother, author Penelope Niven, Jennifer has conducted numerous seminars in writing and addressed audiences around the world.

For more information, visit her website: www.jenniferniven.com. Photo credit: Stephen Hunton.