

The Hannah Swensen mystery series

by Joanne Fluke



The Chocolate Chip Cookie Murder [2000]

Discover the delicious mystery that started it all!

No one cooks up a delectable, suspense-filled mystery quite like Hannah

Swensen, Joanne Fluke's dessert-baking, red-haired heroine whose gingersnaps are as tart as her comebacks, and whose penchant for solving crimes—one delicious clue at a time — has made her a bestselling favorite. And it all began on these pages, with a bakery, a murder, and some suddenly scandalous chocolate-chip crunchies. Featuring a bonus short story and brand new, mouthwatering recipes, this limited edition of the very first Hannah Swensen mystery is sure to have readers coming back for seconds...

Hannah Swenson already has her hands full trying to dodge her mother's attempts to marry her off while running The Cookie Jar, Lake Eden, Minnesota's most popular bakery. But once Ron LaSalle, the beloved delivery man from the Cozy Cow Dairy, is found murdered behind her bakery with Hannah's famous Chocolate Chip Crunchies scattered around him, her life just can't get any worse. Determined not to let her cookies get a bad reputation, she sets out to track down a killer.

Who would have the sheer audacity — and the motive — to kill the most punctual delivery man Hannah ever had? Topping the list is the high school football coach. What exactly was his wife doing, making the rounds with the milkman? Could Max Turner, owner of Cozy Cow Dairy, have had a secret he didn't want to share with his top employee? The more Hannah snoops, the more suspects turn up. Why has Lake Eden's most prominent prodigal son, Benton Woodley, just resurfaced? And what about the mysterious Mr. Harris who seemed interested in buying the property next to the dairy, but then disappeared? This is one murder that's starting to leave a very bad taste in Hannah's mouth. And if she doesn't watch her back, Hannah's sweet life may get burned to a crisp. *[Note: Paperback reprints of this novel also include*

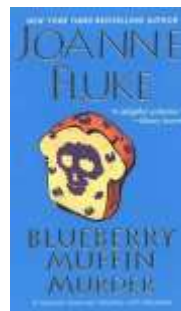
the 2007 short story, The Candy Cane Murder, focusing on one of the series' supporting characters.]



The Strawberry Shortcake Murder [2001]

When the president of Hartland Flour chooses cozy Lake Eden, Minnesota, as the spot for their first annual Dessert Bake-Off, Hannah is thrilled to serve as the head judge. But when a fellow judge,

Coach Boyd Watson, is found stone-cold dead, face down in Hannah's celebrated strawberry shortcake, Lake Eden's sweet ride to fame turns very sour indeed. Between perfecting her Cheddar Cheese Apple Pie and Chocolate Crunchies, Hannah's snooping into the coach's private life and not coming up short on suspects. And could Watson's harsh criticism during the judging have given one of the contestants a license to kill? The stakes are rising faster than dough, and Hannah will have to be very careful, because somebody is cooking up a recipe for murder...with Hannah landing on the 'necessary ingredients' list.

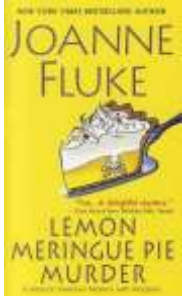


The Blueberry Muffin Murder [2001]

Preparations are underway for Lake Eden, Minnesota's annual Winter Carnival — and Hannah Swenson is set to bake up a storm at her popular shop, The Cookie Jar. Too bad the honor of

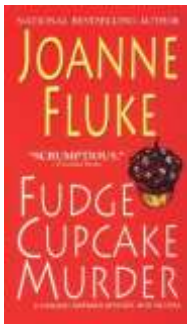
creating the official Winter Carnival cake went to famous lifestyle maven Connie Mac - a half-baked idea, in Hannah's opinion. She suspects Connie Mac is a lot like the confections she whips up on her cable TV cooking show - sweet, light and scrumptious-looking, but likely to leave a bitter taste in your mouth. Hannah's suspicions are confirmed when Connie Mac's limo rolls into town. It

turns out America's "Cooking Sweetheart" is bossy, bad-tempered, and downright domineering. Things finally boil over when Hannah arrives at The Cookie Jar to find the Winter Carnival cake burnt to a crisp — and Connie Mac lying dead in her pantry, struck down while eating of Hannah's famous blueberry muffins.



The Lemon Meringue Pie Murder [2001]

Hannah Swensen, owner of The Cookie Jar and Lake Eden, Minnesota's own amateur sleuth extraordinaire, returns in LEMON MERINGUE PIE MURDER to track down the killer of a neighbor with a sweet tooth. It's summer in Lake Eden and Hannah's younger sister Michelle is coming home for a visit. But before the family reunion can get under way, Hannah discovers the body of a local resident in the woman's basement. The only clue is one of Hannah's luscious lemon meringue pies on the kitchen counter with only one slice missing.....even though from the looks of the victim's kitchen, she was planning an intimate dinner for two.



The Fudge Cupcake Murder [2004]

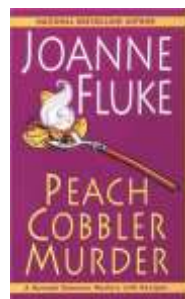
Bakery owner Hannah Swensen just can't keep her hands out of the batter when murder stirs things up in Lake Eden, Minnesota, leaving the sheriff dead, a deputy accused, and a killer on the loose...For Hannah, life seems to be lacking a certain flavor lately. Maybe it's the local sheriff's election that's got her down. For years, Sheriff Grant's been the iron hand in town. But now, Hannah's brother-in-law Bill is giving the old blowhard the fight of his long, dubious career - and Grant's not taking it well, especially once the polls show Bill pulling ahead. But before anyone can taste victory, things go sour. While Hannah's emptying the trash, she makes a very unappetizing discovery: Sheriff Grant's body in the Dumpster behind the high school where she's teaching her cooking class. And as if that weren't bad enough, the poor man still has fudge frosting on his shirt from one of her cupcakes. The number one — and only — suspect is Bill, but Hannah's not swallowing it. Plenty of people had reason to hate

Sheriff Grant. Soon, Hannah's dishing up scandalous secrets, steaming hot betrayals, and enough intrigue to keep the gossip mill at The Cookie Jar going through several pots of decaf. And the closer Hannah gets to the truth, the closer she gets to smoking out a murderer with a very nasty recipe for silencing people...



The Sugar Cookie Murder [2004]

When it comes to holidays, Minnesotans rise to the occasion — and the little town of Lake Eden is baking up a storm with Hannah Swensen leading the way. The annual Christmas Buffet is the final test of Hannah's recipes before publication. The recently divorced Martin Dubinski arrives at the buffet with his new Vegas showgirl wife. And when Hannah's mother's antique cake knife shows up in Mrs. Dubinski's décolletage, it puts the festivities on ice.



The Peach Cobbler Murder [2005]

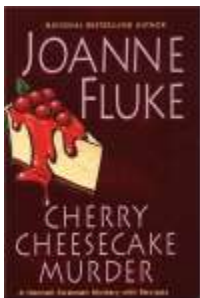
With The Cookie Jar, Hannah Swensen has a mouthwatering monopoly on the bakery business of Lake Eden, Minnesota. But when a rival store opens, tensions begin to bubble... As she sits in her nearly empty store on Groundhog Day, Hannah can only hope that spring is just around the corner--and that the popularity of the new Magnolia Blossom Bakery is just a passing fad. The southern hospitality of Lake Eden's two Georgia transplants, Shawna Lee and Vanessa Quinn, is grating on Hannah's nerves--and cutting into her profits.

At least Hannah has her business partner Lisa's wedding to look forward to. She's turned one of Lisa's favorite childhood treats into a spectacular Wedding Cookie Cake. And Lisa's aunt will be bringing her famous Peach Cobbler to the reception. But Hannah starts to steam when she finds out that Shawna Lee has been invited--and is bringing her own Peach Cobbler.

Hannah doesn't like having the Georgia Peach in the mix, especially when both Shawna Lee and Hannah's sometime-boyfriend, Detective Mike Kingston, are no-shows to the wedding. Hannah has suspected that Mike is

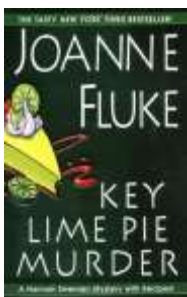
interested in more than Shawna Lee's baking abilities. So when she sees lights on at the Magnolia Blossom Bakery after the reception, she investigates — and finds Shawna Lee shot to death.

Everyone in town knew the Cookie Jar was losing business to the Magnolia Bakery — a fact that puts Hannah at the top of the initial list of suspects. But with a little help from her friends, Hannah's determined to prove that she wasn't the only one who had an axe to grind with the Quinn sisters. Somebody wasn't fooled by the Georgia Peaches and their sweet-as-pie act--and now it's up to Hannah to track down whoever had the right ingredients to whip up a murder...



The Cherry Cheesecake Murder [2006]

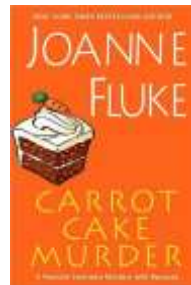
There's no such thing as privacy in Lake Eden, but Hannah never thought things would go this far. Everyone has been telling her what to do ever since she got not one but two marriage proposals — the votes are evenly divided between Detective Mike Kingston and town dentist Norman Rhodes. Movie mania soon shoves Hannah's marriage dilemma into the background and even gives her cat a shot at stardom. The Cookie Jar serves as snack central with Main Street rented out for the week. She stirs lots of fresh gossip, whipping up treats for cast and crew, including demanding director Dean Lawrence's favorite - cherry cheesecake. Everything's on schedule until Dean demonstrates a suicide scene with a prop gun that turns out to be all too real. As filming continues, Hannah sifts through the clues, hoping against hope that the person responsible for Dean's death is half-baked enough to have made a mistake. When it happens, Hannah intends be there - ready to rewrite a killer's lethal script with the kind of quirky ending that can only happen in Lake Eden...



The Key Lime Pie Murder [2007]

It promises to be a busy week for Hannah Swensen. Not only is she whipping up treats for the chamber of commerce booth at the fair; she's also

judging the baking contest; acting as a magician's assistant for her business partner's husband; trying to coax Moishe, her previously rapacious feline, to end his hunger strike, and performing her own private carnival act by juggling the demands of her mother and sisters. With so much on her plate, it's no wonder Hannah finds herself on the midway only moments before the fair closes for the night. As the lights click off, she realizes that she's not alone among the shuttered booths and looming carnival attractions. After hearing a suspicious thump, she goes snooping — only to discover Willa Sunquist, a student teacher and fellow bake contest judge, dead alongside an upended key lime pie. But who would want to kill Willa and why? Before long Hannah is sifting through motives and a list of suspects which include a high school student Willa flunked, the hot-blooded brothers of a disqualified beauty contestant, a rodeo cowboy, a baking competitor who failed to win her yearly blue ribbon, and the college professor Willa was dating. As fair week draws to a close, Hannah cranks up the heat, hoping that the killer will get rattled and make a mistake. If that happens she intends to be there, even if it means getting on a carnival ride that could very well be her last...



The Carrot Cake Murder [2008]

Summertime has finally arrived in Lake Eden, Minnesota, and Hannah Swensen, owner of The Cookie Jar bakery, is looking forward to warm, lazy days, eating ice cream, and sharing picnics with friends. But when a family reunion takes a deadly turn, it's up to Hannah to find a killer... Between baking up a storm for The Cookie Jar and unraveling the mystery of her cat Moishe's recent strange behavior, Hannah Swensen has a lot on her plate. But she'll always make time for her business partner, Lisa, who's in the midst of preparing for a big family reunion. Everyone is delighted when Lisa's long-lost uncle makes a surprise appearance. No one has heard from Gus in twenty-five years — and his arrival has everyone buzzing with excitement.

Uncle Gus is immediately the hit of the reunion, telling tales of his great success and flashing money for all to see. He's almost as popular as Hannah's scrumptious carrot cake, which is also Gus's favorite dessert. But the next

morning, as the whole family gathers for the group photo, one person is missing. Hannah offers to track down Uncle Gus, but her search leads to a shocking find. Over by the bar at the pavilion, she spots two slices of her infamous carrot cake, frosting-side down on the floor — and Gus's corpse with an ice pick jutting out of his chest!

A little snooping reveals that not everyone was celebrating Gus's return. And when Hannah unearths more secrets from Gus's past, she discovers even more people with an axe to grind. Now Hannah's got to sift through a long list of suspects to find a killer — even if it could mean a recipe for her own demise...



The Cream Puff Murder [2009]

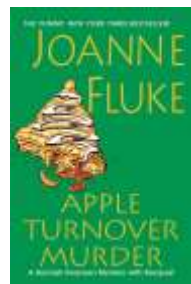
Winter in Lake Eden, Minnesota, is the perfect time to curl up by a cozy fire with something — and someone — sweet. But while bakery owner Hannah Swensen can provide herself with the confections, cuddling will have to take a back seat to sleuthing when her sometime-squeeze becomes a murder suspect...With the launch party of her mother's novel around the corner, Hannah has a dress to fit into and a date with her sister, Andrea, at Lake Eden's new health club, Heavenly Bodies. Dragging herself out of bed on a frigid Minnesota morning for exercise, of all things, is bad enough. Discovering a dead body floating in the gym's Jacuzzi? Okay, that's worse. Nor does it help that there's a plate of The Cookie Jar's very own cream puffs garnishing the murder scene. The fact that they were purchased by none other than Hannah's part-time flame, Detective Mike Kingston, is simply the icing on what's shaping up to be one very messy cake...Mike may be the prime suspect in the murder of man-eating bombshell Ronni Ward, but he's by no means the only one. Ronni, a fitness instructor at both the Sheriff's department and Heavenly Bodies, made a nasty habit of throwing her own heavenly body at every man, eligible or not, who crossed her path. Plenty of Lake Eden's ladies won't miss Ronni, including her ex-fiancé's former girlfriend, the angry mother of one of her would-be conquests, and even the mayor's wife. Could any of them have wanted her gone badly enough to make it happen? Mike's recruited Hannah to find out, and, as any suspended, suspected detective would, he's

micromanaging her every step of the way...Between trying to narrow the list of Ronni's enemies down to fewer than half the town's female population and resisting the urge to remove Mike from the running by throttling him herself, Hannah has her plate full. Trouble is, when it comes to cookies — and to murder — there's always room for one more.



The Plum Pudding Murder [2009]

The Cookie Jar's busiest time of the year also happens to be the most wonderful time...for Christmas cookies, Hannah's own special plum pudding — and romance! Holiday orders are high, and Hannah's slated to provide dessert at the Reverend Knudsen's upcoming nuptials. She's busy as can be and loving it. She also gets a kick out of 'Lunatic Larry Jaeger's Crazy Elf Christmas Tree Lot', a kitschy carnival taking place smack-dab in the middle of the village green. Larry thinks he's crazy like a fox with his wild business schemes, but this time, the entrepreneur may have bitten off more than he can chew. Rumor has it that Larry's in the red — an idea that takes a sinister turn when Hannah discovers the man himself dead as a doornail in his own office...It seems quite a few people would have liked to fill Larry's stocking with coal and then bash him with it - including his bitter ex-wife, his ex-partner's daughter, a woman he was wooing, and the Crazy Elf Tree lot's extremely exasperated investors...Now, with so many suspects to investigate and the twelve days of Christmas ticking away, Hannah's running out of time to nab a murderous Scrooge who doesn't want her to see the New Year.



The Apple Turnover Murder [2010]

It's June in Lake Eden, Minnesota, and for Hannah Swensen, that means bridal showers galore, plus a massive fundraising event in need of confections--not to mention a killer who never learned that charity begins at home...

Early summer brings plenty of work for Hannah, even before Mayor Bascomb's wife drops by The Cookie Jar to place an order ...for eleven-hundred cookies! Stephanie

Bascomb is organizing an elaborate three-day event to support local charities, and though it's a worthy cause, Hannah almost flips when her business partner, Lisa, suggests setting up an apple turnover stand. Hannah's never made a turnover--but, pushover that she is, she places her faith in Lisa's mother-in-law's recipe and agrees to be a magician's assistant in the fundraiser's talent show...

Dozens of pastries and one hideous purple dress later, Hannah has to admit that stepping out of her comfort zone has been fun as well as profitable. The only snag is the show's host, community college professor Bradford Ramsey. Hannah and her younger sister Michelle each had unfortunate romantic relationships with Ramsey, and when the cad comes sniffing around between acts, Hannah tells him off. But when the curtain doesn't go up, she discovers Ramsey backstage--dead as a doornail with a turnover in his hand...

Now, to protect her reputation and Michelle's, Hannah must get to the bottom of the professor's bitter end. There are plenty of scorned suspects, including an ex-wife who feels cheated in more ways than one, and a prominent local who may have been using Ramsey to avenge her own randy spouse. But who was unstable enough to snuff out Professor Love? A killer who's flakier than puff pastry — and far more dangerous...



The Devil's Food Cake Murder [2011]

These days, everyone in Lake Eden, Minnesota, is buzzing with activity, and Hannah Swensen is no exception. But no matter how busy she may be, Hannah can always find time to help a friend in need — especially when he's been murdered. . .

Hannah Swensen has to admit that her life is pretty sweet. Things are going well in the romance department, and her bakery's delectable confections are selling almost as fast as she can bake them. Even her good friend Claire is on Cloud Nine, head over heels with her new husband, Reverend Bob Knudson. If only they could find time to

take their honeymoon!

When Bob's childhood friend, Matthew Walters, comes to town, it seems like divine intervention. Matthew, like Bob, is a Lutheran minister with a stubborn sweet tooth. Since he's on sabbatical, Matthew is happy to fill in for Bob while he and Claire take that long-awaited honeymoon. It sounds like the perfect plan — until Hannah finds Matthew in the rectory, face-down in a plate full of Devil's Food Cake, a single bullet in his head.

Determined to find out who killed Matthew, Hannah starts asking questions — and discovers that the good Reverend wasn't quite the saintly fellow he appeared to be. But could the gold Sacagawea coins in Sunday's collection plate hold the key to solving the crime? Or is the murder connected to that big jewel heist out in Minneapolis? Is it possible that Matthew's love of chocolate somehow led to his downfall? It will take some more digging to find out, but Hannah is sure of one thing: even the most half-baked murder plot can be oh so deadly. . .



The Cinnamon Roll Murder [2012]

With the Cinnamon Roll Six jazz band heading toward Lake Eden for the Weekend Jazz Festival, Hannah Swensen is more than happy to bake up a generous supply of their namesake confections. But tragedy strikes when the band's tour bus overturns on its way into town. Among those injured is Buddy Neiman, the band's beloved keyboard player. At first, Buddy's injuries appear minor, until his condition suddenly takes a turn for the worse — as in dead. Hannah's no doctor, but she suspects that the surgical scissors jutting out of Buddy's chest may have something to do with it.

Turns out Buddy Neiman isn't the victim's real name. In fact, no one is really sure who he is, or what secrets may be lurking in his past. Hannah isn't sure just how she'll unravel this mystery, but there's nothing sweeter than bringing a killer to justice. . .



The Red Velvet Cupcake Murder
[2013]

This summer has been warmer than usual in Lake Eden, Minnesota, and Hannah Swensen is trying to beat the heat both in and out of her bakery kitchen. But she's about to find out the hard way that nothing cools off a hot summer day like cold-blooded murder. . .It's a hot, muggy evening, and the last thing Hannah wants to do is squeeze into a pair of pantyhose for the Grand Opening of the refurbished Albion Hotel. But with Hannah's famous Red Velvet cupcakes being served in the hotel's new Red Velvet lounge, she can't bring herself to back out. The party starts off with a bang with the unexpected arrival of Doctor Bev, a Lake Eden legend who left town in shame after she two-timed her fiancé one too many times. Bev's splashy appearance on the arm of a wealthy investor is the talk of the night. But the gossip comes to a screeching halt when a partygoer takes a mysterious dive off the hotel's rooftop garden. The victim is the sheriff's secretary, Barbara Donnelly, and she is barely clinging to life. The question is, did she fall — or was she pushed? As the police investigate, the only one who isn't preoccupied with the case is Doctor Bev. She's too busy trying to stir things up with her old flame Norman, who's reunited with Hannah. Just as Hannah's patience with Bev runs dangerously thin, her rival is found dead at the bottom of Miller's Pond. The only clue the police have is the Red Velvet cupcake Bev ate right before she died — and the tranquilizers someone seems to have baked into it. To everyone's shock, Hannah is now the unlikely target of a murder investigation — and she's feeling the heat in a way she never has before. . .

The Blackberry Pie Murder [forthcoming 2014]

Coming in February 2014...

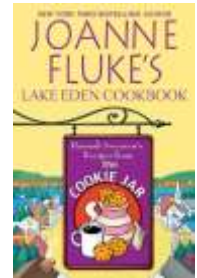
Several Christmas-themed novellas set in the Lake Eden storyline have been published in anthologies over the years. Those stories include:

The Twelve Desserts of Christmas [2006]

Candy Cane Murder [2007]

Gingerbread Cookie Murder [2010]

Joanne Fluke's Lake Eden Cookbook: Hannah Swensen's Recipes From The Cookie Jar
[2011]



It's a picture postcard December in Minnesota. Pristine white snow is glistening in the winter sunlight, and Main Street is brimming with festive holiday decorations. Best of all, it's the day Hannah's mother, Delores Swensen, is holding her annual Holiday Cookie Exchange at the Community Centre — catered by none other than The Cookie Jar! The whole Swensen clan, their friends, and members of "The Lake Eden Gossip Hotline", of which Delores is a founding member, have gathered for the delicious event. And as they share their favorite juicy tales of Lake Eden and its residents over coffee and dessert, they also share their favorite scrumptious cookie recipes — plus a mouth-watering menu of luncheon recipes...plus all the recipes from Chocolate Chip Cookie Murder to Carrot Cake Murder. Whether this is your first taste of Lake Eden, or you're back for another helping, you can now bring the irresistible flavors of The Cookie Jar into your very own kitchen.

www.murdershebaked.com

[Official Joanne Fluke/Hannah Swensen website]

Compiled for the
Just Desserts mystery fiction discussion group
Lincoln City Libraries – Lincoln, NE
8/2013 – SDC