

49-99 Book Club in a Box
TITLES AVAILABLE – APRIL 2017
(Please destroy all previous lists)

FICTION, CONTEMPORARY AND HISTORICAL

All the King's Men -- by Robert Penn Warren – (661 p.) – 14 copies + Audio CD

More than just a classic political novel, Warren's tale of power and corruption in the Depression-era South is a sustained meditation on the unforeseen consequences of every human act, the vexing connectedness of all people and the possibility—it's not much of one—of goodness in a sinful world. Willie Stark, Warren's lightly disguised version of Huey Long, the onetime Louisiana strongman/governor, begins as a genuine tribune of the people and ends as a murderous populist demagogue. Jack Burden is his press agent, who carries out the boss's orders, first without objection, then in the face of his own increasingly troubled conscience. And the politics? For Warren, that's simply the arena most likely to prove that man is a fallen creature. Which it does. (*Goodreads.com*)

All the Light We Cannot See -- by Anthony Doerr – (530 p.) – 15 copies

A novel to live in, learn from, and feel bereft over when the last page is turned, Doerr's magnificently drawn story seems at once spacious and tightly composed. It rests, historically, during the occupation of France during WWII, but brief chapters told in alternating voices give the overall—and long—narrative a swift movement through time and events. We have two main characters, each one on opposite sides in the conflagration that is destroying Europe. Marie-Louise is a sightless girl who lived with her father in Paris before the occupation; he was a master locksmith for the Museum of Natural History. When German forces necessitate abandonment of the city, Marie-Louise's father, taking with him the museum's greatest treasure, removes himself and his daughter and eventually arrives at his uncle's house in the coastal city of Saint-Malo. Young German soldier Werner is sent to Saint-Malo to track Resistance activity there, and eventually, and inevitably, Marie-Louise's and Werner's paths cross. It is through their individual and intertwined tales that Doerr masterfully and knowledgeably re-creates the deprived civilian conditions of war-torn France and the strictly controlled lives of the military occupiers. (*Abbr. from Booklist, Brad Hooper review*)

And the Mountains Echoed – by Khaled Hosseini - (424 p.) – 15 copies + audio (CD)

Author of The Kite Runner and A Thousand Splendid Suns, other titles in our collection.

Saboor, a laborer, pulls his young daughter, Pari, and his son, Abdullah, across the desert in a red wagon, leaving their poor village of Shadbagh for Kabul, where his brother-in-law, Nabi, a chauffeur, will introduce them to a wealthy man and his beautiful, despairing poet wife. A masterful and compassionate storyteller, Hosseini traces the traumas and scarring of tyranny, war, crime, lies, and illness in the intricately interconnected, heartbreaking, and extraordinary lives of his vibrantly realized characters to create a grand and encompassing tree of life. (*Abbr. from Booklist Review*)

The Art of Racing in the Rain – by Garth Stein - (321 p.) – 24 copies + audio (CD) + Large Print

A heart-wrenching but deeply funny and ultimately uplifting story of family, love, loyalty and hope, *The Art of Racing in the Rain* is a beautifully crafted and captivating look at the wonders and absurdities of human life... as only a dog could tell it. (*Amazon.com*)

Articles of War – by Nick Arvin - (178 p.) - 15 copies + audio (CD)

George Tilson is an eighteen-year-old farm boy from Iowa. Enlisted in the Army during World War II and arriving in Normandy just after D-day, he is nicknamed Heck for his reluctance to swear. From summers of farm labor Heck is already strong. He knows how to accept orders and how to work uncomplainingly. But in combat Heck witnesses a kind of brutality unlike anything he could have imagined. Fear consumes his every thought and Heck soon realizes a terrible thing about himself: He is a coward. Possessed of this dark knowledge, Heck is then faced with an impossible task. (*Amazon.com*)

Atonement – by Ian McEwan - (368 p.) - 30 copies + audio (CD)

On a hot summer day in 1935, thirteen-year-old Briony Tallis witnesses a moment's flirtation between her older sister, Cecilia, and Robbie Turner, the son of a servant and Cecilia's childhood friend. But Briony's incomplete grasp of adult motives—together with her precocious literary gifts—brings about a crime that will change all their lives. As it follows that crime's repercussions through the chaos and carnage of World War II and into the close of the twentieth century, *Atonement* engages the reader on every conceivable level, with an ease and authority that mark it as a genuine masterpiece. (*Amazon.com*)

The Aviator's Wife -- by Melanie Benjamin – (396 p.) – 14 copies

Benjamin, author of the highly acclaimed *Alice I Have Been* (2010) and *The Autobiography of Mrs. Tom Thumb* (2011), delivers another stellar historical novel based on the experiences of an extraordinary woman. In this outing, she spotlights Anne Morrow Lindbergh, wife of wildly famous Charles Lindbergh and pioneering aviatrix and accomplished author in her own right. Though their courtship is the stuff of every girl's romantic fantasy, time and reality combine to reveal a much different story. Plagued by tragedy and often stifled by her domineering husband, she eventually manages to carve out a quasi-independent life and career for herself. (*Abbr. from Booklist--*Starred Review*--Margaret Flanagan*)

Beautiful Ruins – by Jess Walter - (309 p.) – 21 copies + audio (CD) + Large Print

You needn't worry. Jess Walter has written a sumptuous epic about the real people who make art, spinning illusion for fun, profit, and meaning. There are screen actors, a novelist, and Pasquale, an innkeeper, who keeps his patrons fed and watered on homemade wine and dreams. Among all the shimmer and hope are the lost souls who long to create something, anything. And just as Jess Walter introduces us to these characters, he follows them for fifty years. The journey will delight and captivate you. (*Amazon.com*)

Balzac and the Little Chinese Seamstress - by Dai Sijie - (184 p.) - 28 copies + audio (CD)

The story of two hapless city boys exiled to a remote mountain village for re-education during China's infamous Cultural Revolution. There the two friends meet the daughter of the local tailor and discover a hidden stash of Western classics in Chinese translation. As they flirt with the seamstress and secretly devour these banned works, the two friends find transit from their grim surroundings to worlds they never imagined. (*Amazon.com*)

Bel Canto - by Ann Patchett - (318 p.) - 24 copies + audio (cassettes)

In the Vice President's house in an unnamed South American country, an elegant dinner party turns into a kidnapping that goes awry - the President the terrorists are intent on capturing misses the dinner. When the government refuses to give in to their demands, the hostage situation continues for a number of weeks during which a pleasant domesticity, enlivened by opera singing, begins to blur the lines between captive and captor. (*www.madisonpubliclibrary.org*)

Blue Heaven - by C.J. Box - (384 p.) – 18 copies

A twelve-year-old girl and her younger brother go on the run in the woods of North Idaho, pursued by four men they have just watched commit murder---four men who know exactly who William and Annie are, and who know exactly where their desperate mother is waiting for news of her children's fate. Retired cops from Los Angeles, the killers easily persuade the inexperienced sheriff to let them lead the search for the missing children. William and Annie's unexpected savior comes in the form of an old-school rancher teetering on the brink of foreclosure. But as one man against four who will stop at nothing to silence their witnesses, Jess Rawlins needs allies, and he knows that one word to the wrong person could seal the fate of the children or their mother. (*Goodreads.com*)

The Book Thief - by Markus Zusak - (539 p.) -- 15 copies

Death is the narrator of this lengthy, powerful story of a town in Nazi Germany. He is a kindly, caring Death, overwhelmed by the souls he has to collect from people in the gas chambers, from soldiers on the battlefields, and from civilians killed in bombings. Death focuses on a young orphan, Liesl; her loving foster parents; the Jewish fugitive they are hiding; and a wild but gentle teen neighbor, Rudy, who defies the Hitler Youth and convinces Liesl to steal for fun. After Liesl learns to read, she steals books from everywhere. More than the overt message about the power of words, it's Liesl's confrontation with horrifying cruelty and her discovery of kindness in unexpected places that tell the heartbreaking truth. (*Abbreviated from Booklist review*)

California Uncovered: Stories for the 21st Century - by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni & others (379 p.) –14 copies

Hear and feel dynamic California in the words of established writers like John Steinbeck, Maxine Hong Kingston, and Joan Didion, as well as compelling new voices that reveal California in all its complexity. *California Uncovered* is a central component of a statewide program sponsored by the California Council for the Humanities designed to inspire people to tell and listen to stories that get at the reality beneath the headlines, statistics, and stereotypes about the state and its people. (*Amazon.com*)

The Call of the Wild - by Jack London - (139 p.) -- 12 copies

The story is set in the Yukon during the 1890s Klondike Gold Rush—a period when strong sled dogs were in high demand. The novel's central character is a dog named Buck, a domesticated dog living at a ranch in the Santa Clara valley of California as the story opens. Stolen from his home and sold into the brutal existence of an Alaskan sled dog, he reverts to atavistic traits. Buck is forced to adjust to, and survive, cruel treatments and fight to dominate other dogs in a harsh climate. Eventually he sheds the veneer of civilization, relying on primordial instincts and lessons he learns, to emerge as a leader in the wild. (*Amazon.com*)

Clara and Mr. Tiffany - by Susan Vreeland - (397 p.) -- 14 copies

It's 1893, and at the Chicago World's Fair, Louis Comfort Tiffany makes his debut with a luminous exhibition of innovative stained-glass windows that he hopes will earn him a place on the international artistic stage. But behind the scenes in his New York studio is the freethinking Clara Driscoll, head of his women's division, who conceives of and designs nearly all of the iconic leaded-glass lamps for which Tiffany will long be remembered. Never publicly acknowledged, Clara struggles with her desire for artistic recognition and the seemingly insurmountable challenges that she faces as a professional woman. She also yearns for love and companionship, and is devoted in different ways to five men, including Tiffany, who enforces a strict policy: He does not employ married women. Ultimately, Clara must decide what makes her happiest—the professional world of her hands or the personal world of her heart. (*Amazon.com*)

Close Range: Wyoming Stories – by Annie Proulx - (288 p.) - 17 copies + audio (CD)

Annie Proulx's masterful language and fierce love of Wyoming are evident in these breathtaking tales of loneliness, quick violence, and the wrong kinds of love. Each of the stunning portraits in *Close Range* reveals characters fiercely wrought with precision and grace. These are stories of desperation and unlikely elation, set in a landscape both stark and magnificent. (*Amazon.com*)

The Coffee Trader - by David Liss - (402 p.) - 18 copies

Amsterdam, 1659: On the world's first commodities exchange, fortunes are won and lost in an instant. Miguel Lienzo, a sharp-witted trader in the city's close-knit community of Portuguese Jews, knows this only too well. Once among the city's most envied merchants, Miguel has suddenly lost everything. Now, impoverished and humiliated, Miguel must find a way to restore his wealth and reputation. Miguel enters into a partnership with a seductive Dutchwoman who offers him one last chance at success—a daring plot to corner the market of an astonishing new commodity called “coffee.” To succeed, Miguel must risk everything he values and face a powerful enemy who will stop at nothing to see him ruined, but he will learn that among Amsterdam's ruthless businessmen, betrayal lurks everywhere, and even friends hide secret agendas. (*Amazon.com*)

Consider This, Señora – by Harriet Doerr - (241 p.) – 18 copies

In this novel the characters find themselves waiting, hoping and living in rural Mexico – a land with the power to enchant, repel, and change all who pass through. Each of the North Americans who settles in Amapolas interacts with the landscape and the Mexican residents in a different way, but it is Ursula Bowles – born in Mexico and now returning near the end of her life - who comes to the truest understanding of the nature of the place. (*Jacket notes*)

Crown of Dust - by Mary Volmer - (274 p.) – 16 copies

The gold rush has taken hold of the Wild West. Pioneers from around the country congregate in makeshift settlements like Motherlode in hopes of striking it rich. It's here that Alex, disguised as a boy and on the run from her troubled past, is able to blend in among the rough and tumble prospectors living on little more than adrenaline and moonshine. Word spreads quickly when Alex becomes the first in Motherlode to strike gold. Outsiders pour in from wealthy east coast cities, primed to cash in on the discovery. But these opportunists from the outside world have no place in Motherlode and threaten to rip the town—and its residents—apart. Alex must fight to protect her buried secrets—and her life. And against the odds, it's here, in this lawless outpost, that Alex is finally able to find friendship, redemption, and even love. (*Amazon.com*)

Cry the Beloved Country -- by Alan Paton – (312 p.) – 15 copies

In search of missing family members, Zulu priest Stephen Kumalo leaves his South African village to traverse the deep and perplexing city of Johannesburg in the 1940s. With his sister turned prostitute, his brother turned labor protestor and his son, Absalom, arrested for the murder of a white man, Kumalo must grapple with how to bring his family back from the brink of destruction as the racial tension throughout Johannesburg hampers his attempts to protect his family. (*Abbreviated from Publishers Weekly*)

The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time - by Mark Haddon - (226 p.) - 24 copies + audio (CD)

Christopher John Francis Boone knows all the countries of the world and their capitals and every prime number up to 7,057. He relates well to animals but has no understanding of human emotions. He cannot stand to be touched. And he detests the color yellow. This improbable story of Christopher's quest to investigate the suspicious death of a neighborhood dog makes for one of the most captivating, unusual, and widely heralded novels in recent years. (*Amazon.com*)

Cutting for Stone – by Abraham Verghese - (688 p.) – 23 copies + audio (CD)

Marion and Shiva Stone are twin brothers born of a secret union between a beautiful Indian nun and a brash British surgeon. Orphaned by their mother's death and their father's disappearance, bound together by a preternatural connection and a shared fascination with medicine, the twins come of age as Ethiopia hovers on the brink of revolution. (*Amazon.com*)

Daughter of Fortune - by Isabel Allende - (416 p.) - 21 copies

An orphan raised in Valparaiso, Chile, by a Victorian spinster and her rigid brother, vivacious young Eliza Sommers follows her lover to California during the Gold Rush of 1849. Entering a world of new arrivals driven mad by gold fever, Eliza moves in a society of single men and prostitutes with the help of her good friend and savior, the Chinese doctor Tao Chi'en. California opens the door to a new life of freedom and independence and her search for her elusive lover gradually turns into another kind of journey. (*Amazon.com*)

Devil in a Blue Dress – by Walter Mosley - (263 p.) - 17 copies

Set in the late 1940s, in the African-American community of Watts, Los Angeles, this story follows Easy Rawlins, a black war veteran just fired from his job at a defense plant. Easy is drinking in a friend's bar, wondering how he'll meet his mortgage, when a white man in a linen suit walks in, offering good money if Easy will simply locate Miss Daphne Monet, a blonde beauty known to frequent black jazz clubs. (*Amazon.com*)

Divine Secrets of the Ya-Ya Sisterhood - by Rebecca Wells - (469 p.) - 20 copies

When Siddalee Walker, oldest daughter of Vivi Walker, Ya-Ya extraordinaire, is interviewed in the New York Times about a hit play she's directed, her mother gets described as a "tap-dancing child abuser." Enraged, Vivi disowns Sidida. Devastated, Sidida begs forgiveness, and postpones her upcoming wedding. All looks bleak until the Ya-Yas step in and convince Vivi to send Sidida a scrapbook of their girlhood mementos, called "Divine Secrets of the Ya-Ya Sisterhood." As Sidida struggles to analyze her mother, she comes face to face with the tangled beauty of imperfect love, and the fact that forgiveness, more than understanding, is often what the heart longs for. (*Goodreads.com*)

Dogs of Babel - by Carolyn Parkhurst - (288 p.) – 16 copies + audio cassette

Paul Iverson's life changes in an instant. He returns home one day to find that his wife, Lexy, has died under strange circumstances. The only witness was their dog, Lorelei, whose anguished barking brought help to the scene - but too late. In the days and weeks that follow, Paul begins to notice strange "clues" in their home: books rearranged on their shelves, a mysterious phone call, and other suggestions that nothing about Lexy's last afternoon was quite what it seemed. Paul is determined to decipher this evidence and unlock the mystery of her death. But he can't do it alone; he needs Lorelei's help. A linguist by training, Paul embarks on an impossible endeavor: a series of experiments designed to teach Lorelei to communicate what she knows. Perhaps behind her wise and earnest eyes lies the key to what really happened to the woman he loved, but Paul's investigation leads him in unexpected and even perilous directions. (*Goodreads.com*)

Dreaming in Cuban – by Cristina Garcia - (245 p.) - 20 copies

Here is the dreamy and bittersweet story of a family divided by politics and geography by the Cuban revolution. It is the family story of Celia del Pino, and her husband, daughter and grandchildren, from the mid-1930s to 1980. Celia's story mirrors the magical realism of Cuba itself, a country of beauty and poverty, idealism and corruption, and this story presents a unique vision and a haunting lamentation for a past that might have been. (*Amazon.com*)

English Creek - by Ivan Doig - (352 p.) - 17 copies

This prize-winning portrait of a time and place—Montana in the 1930s—at once inspires and fulfills a longing for an explicable past. It follows the events of the Two Medicine country's summer: the tide of sheep moving into the high country, the capering Fourth of July rodeo and community dance, and an end-of-August forest fire high in the Rockies. All of this brings the book, as well as the McCaskill family's struggle within itself, to a stunning climax. It is a season of escapade as well as drama, during which fourteen-year-old Jick comes of age. Through his eyes we see those nearest and dearest to him at a turning point—"where all four of our lives made their bend"—and discover along with him his own connection to the land, to history, and to the deep-fathomed mysteries of one's kin and one's self. (*Amazon.com*)

Endless Love - by Scott Spencer - (418 p.) - 15 copies

One of the most celebrated novels of its time, *Endless Love* remains perhaps the most powerful novel ever written about young love. Riveting, compulsively readable, and ferociously sexual, *Endless Love* tells the story of David Axelrod and his overwhelming love for Jade Butterfield. David's and Jade's lives are consumed with each other; their rapport, their desire, their sexuality take them further than they understand. And when Jade's father suddenly banishes David from the house, he fantasizes the forgiveness his rescue of the family will bring and he sets a "perfectly safe" fire to their house. What unfolds is a nightmare, a dark world in which David's love is a crime and a disease, a world of anonymous phone calls, crazy letters, and new fears — and the inevitable and punishing pursuit of the one thing that remains most real to him: his endless love for Jade and her family. (*Goodreads.com*)

A Fabricated Mexican – by Rick Rivera - (168 p.) - 18 copies

In a series of poignant vignettes, Ricky Coronado takes us on his search for identity, a search made difficult by the specter of his father's suicide and the pressures placed upon him by his strong-willed mother. In his journey of self-discovery that harkens to the pioneer work of Oscar Zeta Acosta's *Brown Buffalo* adventures, Ricky comes to the realization that generations of hyphenated Americans have reached: the painful but rewarding creation of a new self that combines elements of both ethnic realities. (*Amazon.com*)

Frankenstein - by Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley - (191 p.) - 24 copies

Few creatures of horror have seized readers' imaginations and held them for so long as the anguished monster of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*. The story of Victor Frankenstein's terrible creation and the havoc it caused has enthralled generations of readers and inspired countless writers of horror and suspense. With *Frankenstein*, she [Mary Shelley] succeeded admirably in the task she set for herself: to create a story that, in her own words, "would speak to the mysterious fears of our nature and awaken thrilling horror — one to make the reader dread to look round, to curdle the blood, and quicken the beatings of the heart." (*Amazon.com*)

Ghost of Hannah Mendes - by Naomi Ragen - (384 p.) - 21 copies

When Catherine da Costa, a wealthy Manhattan matron, learns she has only a short time to live, she realizes that her family tree will die unless she passes on its legacy and traditions to her granddaughters. But Suzanne and Francesca, beautiful young women caught up in trendy causes and ambitious careers, have no interest in the past. Catherine almost despairs until one night she is visited by the ghost of her family's ancestor, an indomitable Renaissance businesswoman named Hannah Mendes. The ghost of Hannah Mendes encourages Catherine to use every trick in the book to coerce the granddaughters to journey across Europe and acquaint themselves with their roots. While the sisters honor their grandmother's request out of loyalty, they believe their quest is futile--until it starts to uncover ancient pages from Hannah Mendes's fascinating memoir, and brings new loves into their lives. (*Amazon.com*)

The Ghost Bride -- by Yangtze Choo – (360 p.) – 13 copies

Choo's remarkably strong and arresting first novel explores the concept of Chinese spirit marriages in late-nineteenth-century Malaya through the eyes of the highly relatable Li Lan, who is approached by the wealthy family of a dead man to become his bride. Li Lan prefers to rebuff the unusual offer... But when her dreams are brusquely invaded by the rather unsavory dead man, Lim Tian Ching, she realizes she may already be in over her head. Her dead suitor's living cousin, Tian Bai, now the family heir, further complicates matters as Li Lan wrestles with her very real attraction to him. As the angry ghost becomes more possessive in her dreams, and his family more demanding that she marry him, Li Lan's involvement with the Lim family becomes even murkier and potentially dangerous. (*Abbr. from Booklist*)

The Girl on the Train -- by Paula Hawkins – (323 p.) – 15 copies

Rachel commutes to London each day, pretending to go to a job she got sacked from months ago for being drunk. Her ex-husband left her for Anna, and now they have a baby and are living in the home Rachel so lovingly decorated. Almost every day, from the train window, she sees Megan and Scott, who live two doors down from her old home. Rachel vividly imagines Megan and Scott's perfect life, giving them elaborate backstories; however, one day she sees Megan kissing a man who is not her husband; the very next day, Megan goes missing. Rachel inserts herself into the investigation with a headlong desperation, keen to find a way to give her life meaning, and what she discovers is surprising on every level. A wicked thriller, cleverly done. (*Abbr. from review by Joanne Wilkinson –Booklist Online*)

The Girl Who Kicked the Hornet's Nest – by Stieg Larsson (563 p.) - 14 copies

The third and final novel in Stieg Larsson's internationally best-selling Millennium trilogy.

Lisbeth Salander—the heart of Larsson's two previous novels—lies in critical condition, a bullet wound to her head, in the intensive care unit of a Swedish city hospital. She's fighting for her life in more ways than one: if and when she recovers, she'll be taken back to Stockholm to stand trial for three murders. With the help of her friend, journalist Mikael Blomkvist, she will not only have to prove her innocence, but also identify and denounce those in authority who have allowed the vulnerable, like herself, to suffer abuse and violence. And, on her own, she will plot revenge—against the man who tried to kill her, and the corrupt government institutions that very nearly destroyed her life. (*Amazon.com*)

The Girl Who Played with Fire by Stieg Larsson - (630 p.) - 14 copies

The second novel in Stieg Larsson's internationally best-selling Millennium trilogy

Mikael Blomkvist, crusading publisher of the magazine *Millennium*, has decided to run a story that will expose an extensive sex trafficking operation. On the eve of its publication, the two reporters responsible for the article are murdered, and the fingerprints found on the murder weapon belong to his friend, the troubled genius hacker Lisbeth Salander. Blomkvist, convinced of Salander's innocence, plunges into an investigation. Meanwhile, Salander herself is drawn into a murderous game of cat and mouse, which forces her to face her dark past. (*Amazon.com*)

The Girl with a Pearl Earring – by Tracy Chevalier – (233 p.) – 15 copies

With precisely 35 canvases to his credit, the Dutch painter Johannes Vermeer represents one of the great enigmas of 17th-century art. The meager facts of his biography have been gleaned from a handful of legal documents. Yet Vermeer's extraordinary paintings of domestic life, with their subtle play of light and texture, have come to define the Dutch golden age. His portrait of the anonymous Girl with a Pearl Earring has exerted a particular fascination for centuries--and it is this magnetic painting that lies at the heart of this novel of the same title as it centers on Vermeer's prosperous Delft household during the 1660s. When Griet, the novel's quietly perceptive heroine, is hired as a servant, turmoil follows. First, the 16-year-old narrator becomes increasingly intimate with her master. Then Vermeer employs her as his assistant--and ultimately has Griet sit for him as a model. (*Goodreads.com*)

The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo – by Stieg Larsson - (465 p.) – 36 copies + audio (CD) + Large Print

The first novel in Stieg Larsson's internationally best-selling Millennium trilogy

Mikael Blomkvist, crusading journalist and publisher of the magazine *Millennium*, has decided to run a story that will expose an extensive sex trafficking operation between Eastern Europe and Sweden, implicating well-known and highly placed members of Swedish society, business, and government. But he has no idea just how explosive the story will be until, on the eve of publication, the two investigating reporters are murdered. (*readinggroupguides.com*)

Gone Girl – by Gillian Flynn – (413 p.) – 12 copies + audio (CD)

On a warm summer morning in North Carthage, Missouri, it is Nick and Amy Dunne's fifth wedding anniversary. Presents are being wrapped and reservations are being made when Nick's clever and beautiful wife disappears. Husband-of-the-Year Nick isn't doing himself any favors with cringe-worthy daydreams about the slope and shape of his wife's head, but passages from Amy's diary reveal the alpha-girl perfectionist could have put anyone dangerously on edge. Under mounting pressure from the police and the media—as well as Amy's fiercely doting parents—the town golden boy parades an endless series of lies, deceits, and inappropriate behavior. Nick is oddly evasive, and he's definitely bitter—but is he really a killer? (*Amazon.com*)

**Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society – by Mary Ann Shaffer - (304 p.)
– 32 copies + audio (CD) + 2 Large Print**

January 1946: London is emerging from the shadow of the Second World War, and writer Juliet Ashton is looking for her next book subject. Who could imagine that she would find it in a letter from a man she's never met, a native of the island of Guernsey, who has come across her name written inside a book. As Juliet and her new correspondent exchange letters, Juliet is drawn into the world of this man and his friends—and what a wonderfully eccentric world it is. The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society—born as a spur-of-the-moment alibi when its members were discovered breaking curfew by the Germans occupying their island—boasts a charming, funny, deeply human cast of characters. Juliet begins a remarkable correspondence with the members, learning about their island, their taste in books, and the impact on their lives of the German occupation. Captivated by their stories, she sets sail for Guernsey, and what she finds will change her forever. Written with warmth and humor as a series of letters, this novel is a celebration of the written word in all its guises, and of finding connection in the most surprising ways. (*Amazon.com*)

Handle with Care: A Novel – by Jodi Picoult – (473 p.) – 12 copies

Author of My Sister's Keeper, another title in our collection

Every expectant parent will tell you that they don't want a perfect baby, just a healthy one. Charlotte and Sean O'Keefe would have asked for a healthy baby, too, if they'd been given the choice. Instead, their lives are made up of sleepless nights, mounting bills, the pitying stares of "luckier" parents, and maybe worst of all, the what-ifs. What if their child had been born healthy? But it's all worth it because Willow is, funny as it seems, perfect. She's smart as a whip, on her way to being as pretty as her mother, kind, brave, and for a five-year-old an unexpectedly deep source of wisdom. Willow is Willow, in sickness and in health. Everything changes, though, after a series of events forces Charlotte and her husband to confront the most serious what-ifs of all. What if Charlotte had known earlier of Willow's illness? What if things could have been different? What if their beloved Willow had never been born? To do Willow justice, Charlotte must ask herself these questions and one more. What constitutes a valuable life? (*Amazon.com*)

The Handmaid's Tale – by Margaret Atwood (320 p.) - 16 copies + audio (cassettes)

Canadian poet and novelist Atwood presents a fable of the near future. In the Republic of Gilead, formerly the United States, far-right ideals have been carried to extremes in the monotheocratic government. The resulting society is a feminist's nightmare: women are strictly controlled, unable to have jobs or money, and assigned to various classes. The tale is told by a Handmaid who recalls the past and tells how the chilling society came to be. (*Library Journal*)

The Help – by Kathryn Stockett (544 p.) – 37 copies + audio (CD) + Large Print

Aibileen is a black maid in 1962 Mississippi, who's always taken orders quietly, but lately she's unable to hold her bitterness back. Her friend Minny has never held her tongue but must somehow keep secrets about her employer that leave her speechless. White socialite Skeeter just graduated college. She's full of ambition, but without a husband, she's considered a failure. Together, these seemingly different women join together to write a tell-all book about work as a black maid in the South that could forever alter their destinies and the life of a small town. (*Amazon.com*)

History of Love – by Nicole Kraus (272 p.) - 18 copies

As a long-lost book reappears, it mysteriously connects an old man who's searching for his son and a girl who's seeking a cure for her widowed mother's loneliness. Leo Gursky taps his radiator each evening to let his upstairs neighbor know he's still alive. But it wasn't always like this: in the Polish village of his youth, he fell in love and wrote a book...Sixty years later and half a world away, fourteen-year-old Alma, who was named after a character in that book, undertakes an adventure to find her namesake and save her family. (*Amazon.com*)

The Honk and Holler Opening Soon - by Billie Letts (290 p.) - 15 copies

Caney Paxton wanted his cafe to have the biggest and brightest sign in Eastern Oklahoma—the "opening soon" part was supposed to be just a removable, painted notice. But a fateful misunderstanding gave Vietnam vet Caney the flashiest joke in the entire state. Twelve years later, the once-busy highway is dead and the sign is as worn as Caney, who hasn't ventured outside the diner since it opened. Then one blustery December day, a thirtyish Crow woman blows in with a three-legged dog in her arms and a long-buried secret on her mind. Hiring on as a carhop, Vena Takes Horse is soon shaking up business, the locals, and Caney's heart...as she teaches them all about generosity of spirit, love, and the possibility of promise—just like the sign says. (*Amazon.com*)

Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet – by Jamie Ford (290 p.) – 25 copies + audio (CD) + Large Print

Henry Lee comes upon a crowd gathered outside the Panama Hotel, once the gateway to Seattle's Japantown. It has been boarded up for decades, but now the new owner has made an incredible discovery: the belongings of Japanese families, left when they were rounded up and sent to internment camps during World War II. As Henry looks on, the owner opens a Japanese parasol. This simple act takes old Henry Lee back to the 1940s, at the height of the war, when young Henry's world is a jumble of confusion and excitement, and to his father, who is obsessed with the war in China and having Henry grow up American. (*www.readinggroupguides.com*)

House of Sand and Fog -- by Andre Dubus III – (365 p.) – 13 copies

...Andre Dubus manages to get deep inside the heads of two very different characters who clash over a modest house in the San Francisco suburbs. Kathy is a recovering alcoholic and cokehead who loses her inherited bungalow for alleged nonpayment of taxes. Behmini, an Iranian who was an officer in the Shah's air force before fleeing the revolution, is now struggling to succeed in the United States. He buys the house at auction, planning to make a profit on the resale. Kathy skulks around the neighborhood and eventually confronts the family. When she becomes sexually involved with the policeman she met at her eviction, a married man with bad judgment and a drinking problem of his own, he takes up her cause with explosive results. Dubus's attention to detail and realistic prose style give the narrative a hard-edged, cinematic quality, but unlike many movies, its outcome is unexpected. (*Abbreviated from Library Journal*)

Housekeeping – by Marilynne Robinson (219 p.) – 16 copies

The story of Ruth and her younger sister, Lucille, who grow up haphazardly, first under the care of their competent grandmother, then two comically bumbling great-aunts, and finally Sylvie, their eccentric and remote aunt. The family house is in the small Far West town of Fingerbone set on a glacial lake, the same lake where their grandfather died in a spectacular train wreck, and their mother drove off a cliff to her death. It is a town "chastened by an outsized landscape and extravagant weather, and chastened again by an awareness that the whole of human history had occurred elsewhere." Ruth and Lucille's struggle toward adulthood beautifully illuminates the price of loss and survival, and the dangerous and deep undertow of transience. (*Amazon.com*)

If He Hollers Let Him Go – by Chester Himes - (203 p.) - 12 copies

This classic story of a man living in fear every day of his life for simply being black is as powerful today as when it was first published in 1947. Set in Southern California in the early forties, the novel spans four days in the life of Bob Jones, a black man relentlessly plagued by the effects of World War II racism. His is a society drenched in insidious race consciousness, and these surroundings take their toll on his behavior, thoughts and emotions – even before he is accused of a brutal crime he did not commit. (*Amazon.com*)

The Illusion of Separateness - by Simon Van Booy - (208 p.) - 12 copies

A harrowing and enchanting story of how one man's act of mercy during World War II changed the lives of strangers, and how they each discover the astonishing truth of their connection. Whether they are pursued by Nazi soldiers, old age, shame, deformity, disease, or regret, the characters in this utterly compelling novel discover in their darkest moments of fear and isolation that they are not alone, that they were never alone, that every human being is a link in an unseen chain. (*Amazon.com*)

In the Lake of the Woods – by Tim O'Brien - (320 p.) - 16 copies

This riveting novel of love and mystery examines the lasting impact of the twentieth century's legacy of violence and warfare, both at home and abroad. When long-hidden secrets about the atrocities he committed in Vietnam come to light, a candidate for the U.S. Senate retreats with his wife to a lakeside cabin in northern Minnesota. Within days of their arrival, his wife mysteriously vanishes into the watery wilderness. (*Amazon.com*)

In the Time of the Butterflies – by Julia Alvarez - (321 p.) - 23 copies

It is November 25, 1960, and three beautiful sisters have been found near their wrecked Jeep at the bottom of a 150-foot cliff on the north coast of the Dominican Republic. The official state newspaper reports their deaths as accidental. It does not mention that a fourth sister lives. Nor does it explain that the sisters were among the leading opponents of Gen. Rafael Leonidas Trujillo's dictatorship. It doesn't have to. Everybody knows of Las Mariposas—"The Butterflies." In this extraordinary novel, the voices of all four sisters—Minerva, Patria, María Teresa, and the survivor, Dedé—speak across the decades to tell their own stories, and through the art and magic of imagination, the martyred Butterflies live again in this novel of courage and love, and the human cost of political oppression. (*Amazon.com*)

The Invention of Wings – by Sue Monk Kidd – (359 p.) – 11 copies + Large Print

Author of The Mermaid Chair and The Secret Life of Bees, other titles in our collection

Hetty "Handful" Grimke, an urban slave in early nineteenth century Charleston, yearns for life beyond the suffocating walls that enclose her within the wealthy Grimke household. The Grimke's daughter, Sarah, has known from an early age she is meant to do something large in the world, but she is hemmed in by the limits imposed on women. Kidd's sweeping novel is set in motion on Sarah's eleventh birthday, when she is given ownership of ten year old Handful, who is to be her handmaid. We follow their remarkable journeys over the next thirty five years, as both strive for a life of their own, dramatically shaping each other's destinies and forming a complex relationship marked by guilt, defiance, estrangement and the uneasy ways of love. As the stories build to a riveting climax, Handful will endure loss and sorrow, finding courage and a sense of self in the process. Sarah will experience crushed hopes, betrayal, unrequited love, and ostracism before leaving Charleston to find her place alongside her fearless younger sister, Angelina, as one of the early pioneers in the abolition and women's rights movements.

The Jane Austen Book Club – by Karen Joy Fowler - (288 p.) - 25 copies

In California's central valley, five women and one man join to discuss Jane Austen's novels. Over the six months they get together, marriages are tested, affairs begin, unsuitable arrangements become suitable, and love happens. With her eye for the frailties of human behavior and her ear for the absurdities of social intercourse, Karen Joy Fowler has never been wittier nor her characters more appealing. The result is a delicious dissection of modern relationships. (*Amazon.com*)

Jodi Picoult variety – by Jodi Picoult (varies) – 47 copies total

Rather than multiple copies of one title, this box includes 20 copies of a variety of titles by Jodi Picoult. At least 9 different titles are included, such as *Vanishing Acts*, *Nineteen Minutes*, *Sing You Home*, and *Lone Wolf*. Have a great discussion comparing and contrasting these and other stories.

The Kitchen House -- by Kathleen Grissom – (365 p.) - 16 copies + Large Print

Lavinia, an orphaned seven-year-old white indentured servant, arrives in 1791 to work in the kitchen house at Tall Oaks, a Tidewater, Va., tobacco plantation owned by Capt. James Pyke. Belle, the captain's illegitimate half-white daughter who runs the kitchen house, shares narration duties, and the two distinctly different voices chronicle a troublesome 20 years: Lavinia becomes close to the slaves working the kitchen house, but she can't fully fit in because of her race. At 17, she marries Marshall, the captain's brutish son turned inept plantation master, and as Lavinia ingratiates herself into the family and the big house, racial tensions boil over into lynching, rape, arson, and murder. The plantation's social order's emphasis on violence, love, power, and corruption provides a trove of tension and grit, while the many nefarious doings will keep readers hooked to the twisted, yet hopeful, conclusion. (*Abbr. from Publishers Weekly*)

Kite Runner – Khaled Hosseini - (371 p.) - 35 copies + audio (CD) + Large Print

Author of A Thousand Splendid Suns and As the Mountains Echoed, other titles in our collection

The unforgettable, heartbreaking story of the unlikely friendship between a wealthy boy and the son of his father's servant, *The Kite Runner* is a beautifully crafted novel set in a country that is in the process of being destroyed. It is about the power of reading, the price of betrayal, and the possibility of redemption; and an exploration of the power of fathers over sons—their love, their sacrifices, their lies. (*Amazon.com*)

The Language of Flowers - by Vanessa Diffenbaugh - (308 p.) – 15 copies + audio (CD)

The Victorian language of flowers was used to convey romantic expressions: honeysuckle for devotion, asters for patience, and red roses for love. But for Victoria Jones, it's been more useful in communicating mistrust and solitude. After a childhood spent in the foster-care system, she is unable to get close to anybody, and her only connection to the world is through flowers and their meanings. Now eighteen and emancipated from the system with nowhere to go, Victoria realizes she has a gift for helping others through the flowers she chooses for them. But an unexpected encounter with a mysterious stranger has her questioning what's been missing in her life. And when she's forced to confront a painful secret from her past, she must decide whether it's worth risking everything for a second chance at happiness. (*Amazon.com*)

The Last Runaway -- by Tracy Chevalier – (301 p.)- 12 copies

Honor Bright sailed from England to America in 1850 with her sister, Grace, who is betrothed to a fellow Quaker in Ohio. After Grace's death, Honor is left in the awkward position of an outsider, searching for her place in an unsettled land of restless change where even the Quakers are different from those she had known at home. She finds solace in writing letters to friends and family in England and in the exquisite quilting skills that tie her to her old life and offer some hope of ties to a new one. Honor's only true American friend is Belle, the unorthodox milliner who clandestinely aids runaway slaves, even as her rough and charismatic brother, Donovan, hunts them down. Horrified by the realities of slavery, Honor faces the new complexities of the Fugitive Slave Law and the challenges it poses for the Quakers and for her personally. (*Abbr. from Booklist, Vanessa Bush review*)

Leaving Family Behind – by Jerome Peterson - (271 p.) – 13 copies

From Lithuania to Philadelphia, *Leaving Family Behind* tells of two immigrants' historical journey in the early 1900s. It is a story where Jonas and Evelina Violettskus will stop at nothing in pursuit of their individual dreams. Evelina rebels when her older brother forces her to abandon her goal to be a pianist, so he can accomplish his own dream of purchasing farmland in America. Thus begins a bitter sibling rivalry that affects their epic odyssey of self-discovery. Jonas expects Evelina to leave home and country behind, travel thousands of miles through Eastern Europe, and then cross the Atlantic Ocean with a smile on her face and gratefulness in her heart. When she doesn't react this way, their feud begins. Dreams are important and can guide us in life. But when dreams clash, are they worth the risk of hurting loved ones and causing bitterness that could last forever? (*Amazon.com*)

Life of Pi - by Yann Martel - (326 p.) - 33 copies + audio (CD)

The son of a zookeeper, Pi Patel has an encyclopedic knowledge of animal behavior and a fervent love of stories. When Pi is sixteen, his family emigrates from India to North America aboard a Japanese cargo ship, along with their zoo animals bound for new homes. The ship sinks. Pi finds himself alone in a lifeboat, his only companions a hyena, an orangutan, a wounded zebra, and Richard Parker, a 450-pound Bengal tiger. Soon the tiger has dispatched all but Pi, whose fear, knowledge, and cunning allow him to coexist with Richard Parker for 227 days while lost at sea. When they finally reach the coast of Mexico, the authorities who interrogate Pi refuse to believe his story and press him to tell them "the truth." After hours of coercion, Pi tells a second story, a story much less fantastical, much more conventional—but is it more true?

The Light Between Oceans – by M.L. Stedman – (343 p.) – 12 copies

After four harrowing years on the Western Front, Tom Sherbourne returns to Australia and takes a job as the lighthouse keeper on Janus Rock, nearly half a day's journey from the coast. To this isolated island, where the supply boat comes once a season, Tom brings a young, bold, and loving wife, Isabel. Years later, after two miscarriages and one stillbirth, the grieving Isabel hears a baby's cries on the wind. A boat has washed up onshore carrying a dead man and a living baby. Tom, who keeps meticulous records and whose moral principles have withstood a horrific war, wants to report the man and infant immediately. But Isabel insists the baby is a "gift from God," and against Tom's judgment, they claim her as their own and name her Lucy. When she is two, Tom and Isabel return to the mainland and are reminded that there are other people in the world. Their choice has devastated one of them. (*Amazon.com*)

Little Bee – by Chris Cleave - (271 p.) – 20 copies

Little Bee, a young Nigerian refugee, has just been released from the British immigration detention center where she has been held under horrific conditions for the past two years, after narrowly escaping a traumatic fate in her homeland of Nigeria. Alone in a foreign country, without a family, friend, or penny to her name, she seeks out the only English person she knows. Sarah is a posh young mother and magazine editor with whom Little Bee shares a dark and tumultuous past. (www.readinggroupguides.com)

The Lost Wife -- by Alyson Richman – (334 p.) – 12 copies

Alyson Richman has crafted a powerful love story set in Prague as World War II begins. Lenka, a young art student, falls in love with Josef, who is studying medicine. As the Nazis enter the country, the two marry. Josef and his family flee to America, but Lenka refuses to leave her parents and her sister behind. Her family is sent to Terezin, where she works producing art and technical drawings while dreaming of the husband that she will never see again. Josef becomes a successful obstetrician, but he never forgets the wife that he thought the Nazis killed. Many years later, a chance encounter in New York brings them together and gives them a second chance. This novel, based on the experiences of survivors, is a tribute to the power of memory and the strength of those who survived and used art to bear witness. It includes a reader's guide. (www.jewishbookcouncil.org Review by Barbara M. Bibel)

Lydia Cassatt Reading the Morning Paper - by Harriett Scott Chessman (164 p.) - 17 copies + audio (CD)

Beginning in the autumn of 1878, *Lydia Cassatt Reading the Morning Paper* dreams its way into the intimate world of Cassatt's older sibling. Told in the reflective, lyrical voice of Lydia, who is dying of Bright's disease, the novel opens a window onto the extraordinary age in which these sisters lived, painting its sweeping narrative canvas with fascinating real-life figures that include Pierre-Auguste Renoir and Edgar Degas, Cassatt's brilliant, subversive mentor. (*Amazon*)

Major Pettigrew's Last Stand – by Helen Simonson - (384 p.) – 26 copies + 1 Large Print

In the small village of Edgecombe St. Mary in the English countryside lives Major Ernest Pettigrew. Wry, courtly, opinionated, and completely endearing, the Major leads a quiet life valuing the proper things that Englishmen have lived by for generations: honor, duty, decorum, and a properly brewed cup of tea. But then his brother's death sparks an unexpected friendship with Mrs. Jasmina Ali, the Pakistani shopkeeper from the village. Drawn together by their shared love of literature and the loss of their spouses, the Major and Mrs. Ali soon find their friendship blossoming into something more. But village society insists on embracing him as the quintessential local and regarding her as the permanent foreigner. Can their relationship survive the risks one takes when pursuing happiness in the face of culture and tradition? (*Amazon.com*)

A Man Called Ove: A Novel -- by Fredrik Backman – (337 p.) – 15 copies

At 59, Ove is a grumble Gus of the first degree. Rules are made to be followed, signs are meant to be obeyed, and don't even get him started about computers and mobile phones. In truth, Ove has been this way his whole life, but he's gotten worse in the last four years since his wife, Sonia, died, taking with her all the color in a world Ove sees as black-and-white. Ove has decided life without Sonia is not worth living and plans to join her in the next world. But a young couple and their two children (a third is on the way) move in next door, his oldest friend and most feared enemy is about to be forcibly removed to a nursing home, and a street-scarred cat insinuates itself into his life. Suddenly, Ove's suicide plans get delayed as he helps solve neighborly crises large and small. (*Abbr. from Booklist--Carol Haggas review*)

March – by Geraldine Brooks - (304 p.) - 16 copies + audio (CD)

From Louisa May Alcott's beloved classic *Little Women*, Geraldine Brooks has animated the character of the absent father, March, and crafted a story "filled with the ache of love and marriage and with the power of war upon the mind and heart of one unforgettable man" (Sue Monk Kidd). Brooks follows March as he leaves behind his family to aid the Union cause in the Civil War. His experiences will utterly change his marriage and challenge his most ardently held beliefs. (*Amazon.com*)

The Martian – by Andy Weir – (369 p.) – 11 copies + Large Print

Six days ago, astronaut Mark Watney became one of the first people to walk on Mars. Now, he's sure he'll be the first person to die there. After a dust storm nearly kills him and forces his crew to evacuate while thinking him dead, Mark finds himself stranded and completely alone with no way to even signal Earth that he's alive—and even if he could get word out, his supplies would be gone long before a rescue could arrive. Chances are, though, he won't have time to starve to death. The damaged machinery, unforgiving environment, or plain-old "human error" are much more likely to kill him first. But Mark isn't ready to give up yet. Drawing on his ingenuity, his engineering skills—and a relentless, dogged refusal to quit—he steadfastly confronts one seemingly insurmountable obstacle after the next. Will his resourcefulness be enough to overcome the impossible odds against him? (*Amazon.com*)

Me Before You – by JoJo Moyes – (369 p.) – 14 copies

Louisa Clark is an ordinary girl living an exceedingly ordinary life—steady boyfriend, close family—who has barely been farther afield than their tiny village. She takes a badly needed job working for ex – Master of the Universe Will Traynor, who is wheelchair bound after an accident. Will has always lived a huge life — big deals, extreme sports, worldwide travel—and now he's pretty sure he cannot live the way he is. Will is acerbic, moody, bossy—but Lou refuses to treat him with kid gloves, and soon his happiness means more to her than she expected. When she learns that Will has shocking plans of his own, she sets out to show him that life is still worth living. (*Amazon.com*)

The Memory Keeper's Daughter - by Kim Edwards - (401 p.) – 21 copies

On a winter night in 1964, Dr. David Henry is forced by a blizzard to deliver his own twins. His son, born first, is perfectly healthy. Yet when his daughter is born, he sees immediately that she has Down's syndrome. Rationalizing it as a need to protect Norah, his wife, he makes a split second decision that will alter all of their lives forever. He asks his nurse to take the baby away to an institution and never to reveal the secret. But Caroline, the nurse, cannot leave the infant. Instead, she disappears into another city to raise the child herself. So begins this beautifully told story that unfolds over a quarter of a century in which these two families, ignorant of each other, are yet bound by David Henry's fateful decision that long-ago winter night. (*Amazon.com*)

The Mermaid Chair – by Sue Monk Kidd – (332 p.) – 14 copies

Author of The Invention of Wings and The Secret Life of Bees, other titles in our collection

Inside the church of a Benedictine monastery on Egret Island, just off the coast of South Carolina, resides a beautiful and mysterious chair ornately carved with mermaids and dedicated to a saint who, legend claims, was a mermaid before her conversion. When Jessie Sullivan is summoned home to the island to cope with her eccentric mother's seemingly inexplicable behavior, she is living a conventional life with her husband, Hugh, a life "molded to the smallest space possible." Jessie loves Hugh, but once on the island, she finds herself drawn to Brother Thomas, a monk about to take his final vows. Amid a rich community of unforgettable island women and the exotic beauty of marshlands, tidal creeks, and majestic egrets, Jessie grapples with the tension of desire and the struggle to deny it, with a freedom that feels overwhelmingly right and the immutable force of home and marriage. Is the power of the mermaid chair only a myth? Or will it alter the course of Jessie's life? What happens will unlock the roots of her mother's tormented past, but most of all, it will allow Jessie to come discover selfhood and a place of belonging as she explores the thin line between the spiritual and the erotic. (*Amazon.com*)

The Milagro Beanfield War – John Nichols - (456 p.) - 16 copies

Joe Mondragon, a feisty hustler with a talent for trouble, slammed his battered pickup to a stop, tugged on his gumboots, and marched into the arid patch of ground. Carefully (and also illegally), he tapped into the main irrigation channel. And so began - though few knew it at the time – the Milagro beanfield war. But like everything else in the dirt-poor town of Milagro, it would be a patchwork war, fought more by tactical retreats than by battlefield victories. Gradually, the small farmers and sheepmen begin to rally to Joe's beanfield as the symbol of their lost rights and their lost lands. And downstate in the capital, the Anglo water barons and power brokers huddle in urgent conference, intent on destroying that symbol before it destroys their multimillion-dollar land-development schemes. The tale of Milagro's rising is wildly comic and lovingly tender, a vivid portrayal of a town that, half-stumbling and partly prodded, gropes its way toward its own stubborn salvation. (*Amazon.com*)

The Miniaturist - by Jessie Burton - (392 p.) – 13 copies + Large Print

On a brisk autumn day in 1686, eighteen-year-old Nella Oortman arrives in Amsterdam to begin a new life as the wife of illustrious merchant trader Johannes Brandt. . . . Nella's world changes when Johannes presents her with an extraordinary wedding gift: a cabinet-sized replica of their home. To furnish her gift, Nella engages the services of a miniaturist—an elusive and enigmatic artist whose tiny creations mirror their real-life counterparts in eerie and unexpected ways . . . Enchanting, beautiful, and exquisitely suspenseful, *The Miniaturist* is a magnificent story of love and obsession, betrayal and retribution, appearance and truth. (*Abbreviated from Amazon.com*)

Moviegoer - by Walker Percy (242 p.) - 17 copies + audio (CD)

Binx Bolling is a young New Orleans stockbroker who surveys the world with the detached gaze of a Bourbon Street dandy even as he yearns for a spiritual redemption he cannot bring himself to believe in. On the eve of his thirtieth birthday, he occupies himself dallying with his secretaries and going to movies, which provide him with the "treasurable moments" absent from his real life. But one fateful Mardi Gras, Binx embarks on a hare-brained quest that outrages his family, endangers his fragile cousin Kate, and sends him reeling through the chaos of New Orleans' French Quarter. Wry and wrenching, rich in irony and romance, this is a genuine American classic. (*Amazon.com*)

Mr. Churchill's Secretary: a Maggie Hope Mystery -- by Susan Elia McNeal – (349 p.) – 13 copies

The murder of Diana Snyder, a secretary in Prime Minister Winston Churchill's office, creates a vacancy that American expat Maggie Hope agrees to fill, despite her umbrage at having been previously passed over for a more substantive position there. Maggie adjusts fairly quickly, even as the people of London strive to withstand both German bombs and IRA outrages. Since those behind Snyder's fatal stabbing as well as their motive are identified early on, the suspense mainly lies in whether Maggie will be able to use her intellect to foil a plot aimed at decapitating the British government. (*Abbr. from Publishers Weekly*)

Mrs. Lincoln's Dressmaker -- by Jennifer Chiaverini – (350 p.) – 13 copies

Chiaverini's latest is based on the true story of Elizabeth Keckley, who bought freedom from slavery for herself and her son and went on to become a well-known modiste in Washington. Keckley had a front-row seat to history: she dressed Washington's A-list, including Jefferson Davis' wife before they left D.C., and, most intimately, Mary Todd Lincoln. Mrs. Lincoln is mercurial, scheming, extravagant, and troubled, but Elizabeth stands by her as she is lambasted in the press. Long stretches of battle history and descriptions of Lincoln's political rivals lag, while more time spent on Elizabeth's work with newly freed slaves in D.C. would have been welcome. Still, Elizabeth Keckley is an admirable heroine—successful, self-made, and utterly sympathetic. (*Abbr. from Booklist, Susan Maguire review*)

My Sister's Keeper - by Jodi Picoult - (500 p.) – 16 copies + Audio CD

Anna is not sick, but she might as well be. By age thirteen, she has undergone countless surgeries, transfusions, and shots so that her older sister, Kate, can somehow fight the leukemia that has plagued her since childhood. The product of pre-implantation genetic diagnosis, Anna was conceived as a bone marrow match for Kate—a life and a role that she has never challenged...until now. Like most teenagers, Anna is beginning to question who she truly is. But unlike most teenagers, she has always been defined in terms of her sister—and so Anna makes a decision that for most would be unthinkable, a decision that will tear her family apart and have perhaps fatal consequences for the sister she loves. (*Amazon.com*)

Mystic River – by Dennis Lehane - (472 p.) - 20 copies + audio (CD)

When they were children, Sean Devine, Jimmy Marcus, and Dave Boyle were friends. But then a strange car pulled up to their street. One boy got into the car, two did not, and something terrible happened—something that ended their friendship and changed all three boys forever. Now, years later, murder has tied their lives together again... (*Amazon*)

The Namesake - by Jhumpa Lahiri - (291 p.) - 19 copies + Large Print

On the heels of their arranged wedding, Ashoke and Ashima Ganguli settle together in Cambridge, Massachusetts. An engineer by training, Ashoke adapts far less warily than his wife, who resists all things American and pines for her family. When their son is born, the task of naming him betrays the vexed results of bringing old ways to the new world. Named for a Russian writer by his Indian parents in memory of a catastrophe years before, Gogol Ganguli knows only that he suffers the burden of his heritage as well as his odd, antic name. With penetrating insight, Lahiri reveals not only the defining power of the names and expectations bestowed upon us by our parents, but also the means by which we slowly, sometimes painfully, come to define ourselves. (*Amazon.com*)

Night Road - by Kristin Hannah - (385 p.) - 17 copies

Night Road is vivid, emotionally complex novel that raises profound questions about motherhood, identity, love, and forgiveness. It is a luminous, heartbreaking novel that captures both the exquisite pain of loss and the stunning power of hope. This is Kristin Hannah at her very best, telling an unforgettable story about the longing for family, the resilience of the human heart, and the courage it takes to forgive the people we love. (*Goodreads.com*)

Nineteen Minutes -- by Jodi Piccolt – (455 p.) – 12 copies

Peter Houghton, an alienated teen who has been bullied for years by the popular crowd, brings weapons to his high school in Sterling, N.H., one day and opens fire, killing 10 people. Flashbacks reveal how bullying caused Peter to retreat into a world of violent computer games. Alex Cormier, the judge assigned to Peter's case, tries to maintain her objectivity as she struggles to understand her daughter, Josie, one of the surviving witnesses of the shooting. The author's insights into her characters' deep-seated emotions brings this ripped-from-the-headlines read chillingly alive. (*Abbr. from Publishers Weekly review*)

Olive Kitteridge – by Elizabeth Strout - (270 p.) – 22 copies + audio (CD) + Large Print

At times stern, at other times patient, at times perceptive, at other times in sad denial, Olive Kitteridge, a retired schoolteacher, deplores the changes in her little town of Crosby, Maine, and in the world at large, but she doesn't always recognize the changes in those around her. As the townspeople grapple with their problems, mild and dire, Olive is brought to a deeper understanding of herself and her life --- sometimes painfully, but always with ruthless honesty. (*Abbreviated from Amazon.com*)

One Hundred Years of Solitude – by Gabriel Garcia Marquez & Gregory Rabassa (translator) – (422 p.) – 15 copies

The novel tells the story of the rise and fall of the mythical town of Macondo through the history of the family. It is a rich and brilliant chronicle of life and death, and the tragicomedy of humankind. In the noble, ridiculous, beautiful, and tawdry story of the family, one sees all of humanity, just as in the history, myths, growth, and decay of Macondo, one sees all of Latin America. Love and lust, war and revolution, riches and poverty, youth and senility -- the variety of life, the endlessness of death, the search for peace and truth -- these universal themes dominate the novel. Alternately reverential and comical, *One Hundred Years of Solitude* weaves the political, personal, and spiritual to bring a new consciousness to storytelling. Translated into dozens of languages, this stunning work is no less than an accounting of the history of the human race. (*Goodreads.com*)

Orphan Train - by Christina Baker - (273 p.) – 19 copies + audio (CD)

Penobscot Indian Molly Ayer is close to "aging out" out of the foster care system. A community service position helping an elderly woman clean out her home is the only thing keeping Molly out of juvie and worse...As she helps Vivian sort through her possessions and memories, Molly learns that she and Vivian aren't as different as they seem to be. A young Irish immigrant orphaned in New York City, Vivian was put on a train to the Midwest with hundreds of other children whose destinies would be determined by luck and chance. Molly discovers that she has the power to help Vivian find answers to mysteries that have haunted her for her entire life—answers that will ultimately free them both. (*Amazon.com*)

Our Lady of the Forest – by David Guterson - (336 p.) - 19 copies + audio (CD) + audio cassette tape

Ann Holmes is a fragile, pill-popping teenaged runaway who receives a visitation from the Virgin Mary one morning while picking mushrooms in the woods of North Fork, Washington. In the ensuing days the miracle recurs, and the declining logging town becomes the site of a pilgrimage of the faithful and desperate. As these people flock to Ann—and as Ann herself is drawn more deeply into what is either holiness or madness, this story seamlessly splices the miraculous and the mundane. (*Amazon.com*)

Out Stealing Horses – by Per Petterson - (256 p.) - 22 copies + Large Print

Trond's friend Jon often appeared at his doorstep with an adventure in mind for the two of them. But this morning was different. What began as a joy ride on "borrowed" horses ends with Jon falling into a strange trance of grief. Trond soon learns what befell Jon earlier that day—an incident that marks the beginning of a series of vital losses for both boys. Set in the easternmost region of Norway, this story begins with an ending. Now sixty-seven, Trond has settled into a rustic cabin in an isolated area to live the rest of his life with a quiet deliberation, but a meeting with his only neighbor forces him to reflect on that fateful summer. (*Amazon.com*)

The Paris Wife – by Paula McLain - (320 p.) – 21 copies + audio (CD) + Large Print

Chicago, 1920: Hadley Richardson is a quiet twenty-eight-year-old who has all but given up on love and happiness—until she meets Ernest Hemingway. Following a whirlwind courtship and wedding, the pair set sail for Paris, where they become the golden couple in a lively and volatile group—the fabled “Lost Generation”—that includes Gertrude Stein, Ezra Pound, and F. Scott Fitzgerald. Though deeply in love, the Hemingways are ill prepared for the hard-drinking, fast-living, and free-loving life of Jazz Age Paris. As Ernest struggles to find the voice that will earn him a place in history and pours himself into the novel that will become *The Sun Also Rises*, Hadley strives to hold on to her sense of self as her roles as wife, friend, and muse become more challenging. Eventually they find themselves facing the ultimate crisis of their marriage—a deception that will lead to the unraveling of everything they've fought so hard for. (*Amazon.com*)

Passion of Artemisia – by Susan Vreeland - (352 p.) – 18 copies

Recently rediscovered by art historians and one of the few female post-Renaissance painters to achieve fame during her own era, Artemisia Gentileschi led a remarkably "modern" life. Susan Vreeland tells Artemisia's captivating story, beginning with her public humiliation in a rape trial at the age of eighteen, and continuing through her father's betrayal, her marriage of convenience, motherhood, and growing fame as an artist. Set against the glorious backdrops of Rome, Florence, Genoa, and Naples, inhabited by historical characters such as Galileo and Cosimo de' Medici II, and filled with rich details about life as a seventeenth-century painter, Vreeland creates an inspiring story about one woman's lifelong struggle to reconcile career and family, passion and genius.

People of the Book: A Novel – by Geraldine Brooks – (368 p.) – 12 copies + CD

In 1996, Hanna Heath, an Australian rare-book expert, is offered the job of a lifetime: analysis and conservation of the famed Sarajevo Haggadah, which has been rescued from Serb shelling during the Bosnian war. Priceless and beautiful, the book is one of the earliest Jewish volumes ever to be illuminated with images. When Hanna, a loner with a passion for her work, discovers a series of tiny artifacts in its ancient binding, she begins to unlock the book's mysteries. The reader is ushered into an exquisitely detailed and atmospheric past, tracing the book's journey from its salvation back to its creation. In Bosnia during World War II, a Muslim risks his life to protect it from the Nazis. In the hedonistic salons of fin-de-siècle Vienna, the book becomes a pawn in the struggle against the city's rising anti-Semitism. In inquisition-era Venice, a Catholic priest saves it from burning. In Barcelona in 1492, the scribe who wrote the text sees his family destroyed by the agonies of enforced exile. And in Seville in 1480, the reason for the Haggadah's extraordinary illuminations is finally disclosed. Hanna's investigation unexpectedly plunges her into the intrigues of fine art forgers and ultra-nationalist fanatics. Her experiences will test her belief in herself and the man she has come to love. (*Goodreads.com*)

The Pearl -- by John Steinbeck – (90 p.) – 20 copies

The classic novella by John Steinbeck tells the story of a poor diver who discovers a valuable pearl that he sees as the solution for his poverty. The diver, named Kino, encounters greed and violence as he tries to sell the pearl. Kino is beaten and his baby is killed, causing Kino and his wife to see the pearl as bad luck. Kino eventually returns the pearl to the ocean. Steinbeck published the novella in 1947 after being inspired by a folk tale he heard while vacationing in the Baja area. (*From www.reference.com*)

The Pearl That Broke Its Shell -- by Nadia Hashimi – (450 p.) – 12 copies

Hashimi's first novel tells the story of two young Afghan women, separated by a century, who disguise themselves as boys in order to survive. In 2007, nine-year-old Rahima, the middle child among five daughters, becomes a bacha posh, a girl who dresses as a boy so that she can run to the market and escort her sisters when they leave the house. Rahima enjoys incredible freedoms as a boy, from attending school to roughhousing with children her age, but it all comes to an abrupt end when Abdul Khaliq, a vicious warlord, decides he wants her for his wife. Only 13 when she's forced to marry Abdul Khaliq, Rahima draws her strength from her aunt's tales of her ancestor Shekiba, who as a young girl was scarred by kitchen oil and was reviled by her extended family after the death of her parents and siblings. Shekiba eventually found unlikely refuge in the king's palace in Kabul, dressing as a man to guard the king's harem. Alternating between Rahima and Shekiba's stories, Hashimi weaves together two equally engrossing stories in her epic, spellbinding debut. (*From Booklist, Kristine Huntley*)

The Piano Teacher -- by Janice Y. K. Lee – (328 p.) – 13 copies

It is 1952 and the British government has just transferred newly married Martin Pendleton to Hong Kong with his young, naive bride, Claire. Looking to keep herself busy while her husband is working, Claire takes a job as a piano teacher to Locket Chen, the daughter of an upper class Chinese family. Bored by her husband and surprised by her own desire for something exciting, Claire is lured by the colony's exotic ways and lavish lifestyle. She begins an affair with the mysterious Will Truesdale, the Chen's chauffeur, whose tragic past is marked by war, betrayal, and a deep, passionate relationship with a beautiful, Eurasian socialite, Trudy Liang. When Will's past collides with Claire's present, Claire can only watch, stunned, as her delicately orchestrated life falls apart. (*Abbr. from Booklist--Carolyn Kubisz review.*)

Picture Bride - by Yoshiko Uchida - (216 p.) - 32 copies

Carrying a photograph of the man she is to marry but has yet to meet, young Hana Omiya arrives in San Francisco, California, in 1917, one of several hundred Japanese "picture brides" whose arranged marriages brought them to America in the early 1900s. Her story is intertwined with others: her husband, Taro Takeda; Kiku and her husband Henry, who reject demeaning city work to become farmers; Dr. Kaneda, a respected community leader who is destroyed by the adopted land he loves. All are caught up in the cruel turmoil of World War II, when West Coast Japanese Americans are uprooted from their homes and imprisoned in desert detention camps. Although tragedy strikes each of them, the same strength that brought her to America enable Hana to survive. (*Amazon.com*)

The Postmistress – by Sarah Blake - (384 p.) – 21 copies + audio (CD) + Large Print

In 1940, Iris James is the postmistress in coastal Franklin, Massachusetts. Iris knows more about the townspeople than she will ever say, and believes her job is to deliver secrets. Yet one day she does the unthinkable: slips a letter into her pocket, reads it, and doesn't deliver it. Meanwhile, Frankie Bard broadcasts from overseas with Edward R. Murrow. Her dispatches beg listeners to pay heed as the Nazis bomb London nightly. Most of the townspeople of Franklin think the war can't touch them. But both Iris and Frankie know better... (*Amazon.com*)

Praisesong for the Widow – by Paule Marshall - (256 p.) - 22 copies

Throwing into suitcases all she brought with her on this Caribbean cruise, Avey Johnson knows she has to go home. She wonders why she has been dreaming of her childhood, of the months of August spent on a small island with her great-aunt. Then, forced to wait overnight in Grenada for the plane home, Avey loses herself in memories of her marriage. It had been a "successful" marriage, taking her around the world with her late husband, but now she feels that their financial gains were made at the cost of their history and passion for life. The next morning, as she walks on the beach in a dream-like trance, she encounters a man about to leave on his annual trip to his native island of Carriacou. His dancing the Juba dance triggers Avey's memories, and she is talked into going with him. On Carriacou, sixty-five-year-old Avey touches again the feelings of her family, her heritage, and comes to understand, in new ways, traditions she has long forgotten and the importance of knowing - and remembering - her past. (*Abb. from Goodreads*)

Prayers for Sale -- by Sandra Dallas – (305 p.) – 13 copies

When Nit Spindle, a newcomer to Middle Swan, Colorado, spots Hennie Comfort's sign, "Prayers for Sale," she stops to buy a prayer and gains a friend. At 86, Hennie has a passel of stories to tell (one is how she got her name) and finds in Nit an eager listener and kindred spirit. In the telling of Hennie's life—her two marriages, her brush with evil, her dead babies—and in the gradual elicitation of Nit's lonely ponderings, the reader is treated to an oral history of a mountain town and the women who run it while the men are chasing their dreams of gold. Hennie considers passing along her stories and her knowledge of mountain life to Nit a fit pastime, in preparation for her departure from town. (*Abbr. from Booklist review*)

Pride and Prejudice – by Jane Austen - (384 p.) - 19 copies + audio (CD)

First published in 1813, "Pride and Prejudice," Jane Austen's witty comedy of manners - one of the most popular novels of all time - tells the story of Mr and Mrs Bennet's five unmarried daughters after the rich and eligible Mr Bingley and his status-conscious friend, Mr Darcy, have moved into their neighbourhood. "It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune must be in want of a wife." So begins the novel, that features splendidly civilized sparring between the proud Mr. Darcy and the prejudiced Elizabeth Bennet as they play out their spirited courtship in a series of eighteenth-century drawing-room intrigues. (*Goodreads.com*)

The Reader – by Bernhard Schlink – (218 p.) – 12 copies

When he falls ill on his way home from school, fifteen-year-old Michael Berg is rescued by Hanna, a woman twice his age. In time she becomes his lover—then she inexplicably disappears. When Michael next sees her, he is a young law student, and she is on trial for a hideous crime. As he watches her refuse to defend her innocence, Michael gradually realizes that Hanna may be guarding a secret she considers more shameful than murder. (*Amazon.com*)

Remarkable Creatures: A Novel – by Tracy Chevalier - (310 p.) – 13 copies + 2 audio (CD) 1 abridged 1 unabridged

Author of The Girl with a Pearl Earring, another title in our collection

On the windswept, fossil-strewn beaches of the English coast, poor and uneducated Mary Anning learns that she has a unique gift: "the eye" to spot fossils no one else can see. When she uncovers an unusual fossilized skeleton in the cliffs near her home, she sets the religious community on edge, the townspeople to gossip, and the scientific world alight. After enduring bitter cold, thunderstorms, and landslips, her challenges only grow when she falls in love with an impossible man. Mary soon finds an unlikely champion in prickly Elizabeth Philpot, a middle-class spinster who shares her passion for scouring the beaches. Their relationship strikes a delicate balance between fierce loyalty, mutual appreciation, and barely suppressed envy, but ultimately turns out to be their greatest asset. (*Amazon.com*)

The Road – by Cormac McCarthy – (287 p.) – 13 copies

A father and his son walk alone through burned America. Nothing moves in the ravaged landscape save the ash on the wind. It is cold enough to crack stones, and when the snow falls it is gray. The sky is dark. Their destination is the coast, although they don't know what, if anything, awaits them there. They have nothing; just a pistol to defend themselves against the lawless bands that stalk the road, the clothes they are wearing, a cart of scavenged food—and each other. This is the profoundly moving story of a journey. It boldly imagines a future in which no hope remains, but in which the father and his son, "each the other's world entire," are sustained by love. Awesome in the totality of its vision, it is an unflinching meditation on the worst and the best that we are capable of: ultimate destructiveness, desperate tenacity, and the tenderness that keeps two people alive in the face of total devastation. (*Amazon.com*)

The Rosie Project - by Graeme Simsion - (292 P.) – 13 copies + audio (CD)

The art of love is never a science: Meet Don Tillman, a brilliant yet socially inept professor of genetics, who's decided it's time he found a wife. In the orderly, evidence-based manner with which Don approaches all things, he designs the Wife Project to find his perfect partner: a sixteen-page, scientifically valid survey to filter out the drinkers, the smokers, the late arrivers. Rosie Jarman possesses all these qualities. Don easily disqualifies her as a candidate for The Wife Project (even if she is "quite intelligent for a barmaid"). But Don is intrigued by Rosie's own quest to identify her biological father. When an unlikely relationship develops as they collaborate on The Father Project, Don is forced to confront the spontaneous whirlwind that is Rosie—and the realization that, despite your best scientific efforts, you don't find love, it finds you. (*Amazon.com*)

The Samurai's Garden: A Novel - by Gail Tsukiyama - (211 p.) - 13 copies

The daughter of a Chinese mother and a Japanese father, Tsukiyama uses the Japanese invasion of China during the late 1930s as a somber backdrop for her unusual story about a 20-year-old Chinese painter named Stephen who is sent to his family's summer home in a Japanese coastal village to recover from a bout with tuberculosis. Here he is cared for by Matsu, a reticent housekeeper and a master gardener. Over the course of a remarkable year, Stephen learns Matsu's secret and gains not only physical strength, but also profound spiritual insight. Matsu is a samurai of the soul, a man devoted to doing good and finding beauty in a cruel and arbitrary world, and Stephen is a noble student, learning to appreciate Matsu's generous, nurturing way of life and to love Matsu's soulmate, gentle Sachi, a woman afflicted with leprosy. (*Amazon.com*)

Sarah's Key – by Tatiana de Rosnay - (294 p.) - 24 copies + audio (CD) + Large Print

Paris, July 1942: Sarah, a ten year-old girl, is brutally arrested with her family by the French police in the Vel' d'Hiv' roundup, but not before she locks her younger brother in a cupboard in the family's apartment, thinking that she will be back within a few hours. Paris, May 2002: On Vel' d'Hiv's 60th anniversary, journalist Julia Jarmond is asked to write an article about this black day in France's past. Through her contemporary investigation, she stumbles onto a trail of long-hidden family secrets that connect her to Sarah. Julia finds herself compelled to retrace the girl's ordeal, from that terrible term in the Vel d'Hiv', to the camps, and beyond. As she probes into Sarah's past, she begins to question her own place in France, and to reevaluate her marriage and her life. (*Amazon.com*)

Sea Glass - by Anita Shreve - (400 P.) – 14 copies

Vividly evoking the life of the coastal community at the beginning of the Great Depression, *Sea Glass* shifts through the multiple points of view of six principal characters. We learn how these lives come together following the stock market crash of 1929 and about the struggles of mill workers on the starkly beautiful New Hampshire coast during the following year. Each character finds unexpected new purpose beyond the struggle to survive during that turbulent year among the dunes. First their lives barely touch, then they intersect, and finally they become inextricably bound. (*Abbreviated from Amazon.com Review*)

The Secret Life of Bees – by Sue Monk Kidd – (302 p.) – 15 copies

Author of The Invention of Wings and The Mermaid Chair, other titles in our collection

This coming-of-age tale set in South Carolina in 1964 tells the story of Lily Owens, whose life has been shaped around the blurred memory of the afternoon her mother was killed. When Lily's fierce-hearted black "stand-in mother," Rosaleen, insults three of the town's most vicious racists, Lily decides they should both escape to Tiburon, South Carolina—a town that holds the secret to her mother's past. There they are taken in by an eccentric trio of black beekeeping sisters who introduce Lily to a mesmerizing world of bees, honey, and the Black Madonna who presides over their household. This is a remarkable story about divine female power and the transforming power of love—a story that women will continue to share and pass on to their daughters for years to come. (*Amazon.com*)

The Shack: Where Tragedy Confronts Eternity – by William P. Young - (246 p.) – 22 copies

Mackenzie Allen Philips' youngest daughter, Missy, has been abducted during a family vacation and evidence that she may have been brutally murdered is found in an abandoned shack deep in the Oregon wilderness. Four years later in the midst of his Great Sadness, Mack receives a suspicious note, apparently from God, inviting him back to that shack for a weekend. Against his better judgment he arrives at the shack on a wintry afternoon and walks back into his darkest nightmare. What he finds there will change Mack's world forever. (*Amazon.com*)

Shanghai Girls – by Lisa See - (309 p.) – 17 copies

In 1937 Shanghai, twenty-one-year-old Pearl Chin and her younger sister, May, are having the time of their lives. Both are beautiful, modern, and carefree—until the day their father tells them that he has gambled away their wealth. To repay his debts, he must sell the girls as wives to suitors who have traveled from Los Angeles to find Chinese brides. As Japanese bombs fall on their beloved city, Pearl and May set out on the journey of a lifetime, from the Chinese countryside to the shores of America. Though inseparable best friends, the sisters also harbor petty jealousies and rivalries. Along the way they make terrible sacrifices, face impossible choices, and confront a devastating, life-changing secret, but through it all the two heroines hold fast to who they are—Shanghai girls. (*Amazon.com*)

The Silver Star -- by Jeannette Walls – (267 p.) – 13 copies + Audio CD

Being a single mother is never easy, but for Charlotte Holladay, a wannabe folk singer in 1970, raising her 15- and 12-year-old daughters, Liz and Jean (aka “Bean”), is more than she can handle. Known for dropping out when things get tough, Charlotte's latest spell of parental abandonment attracts police attention and the girls flee California rather than face being placed in foster care. A cross-country bus trip lands them on the doorstep of their only relative, the previously unmet Uncle Tinsley, and their arrival proves to be as much of a shock for the reclusive widower as it is for the girls themselves. As the trio learns to coexist, Liz and Bean try to fit into the small southern town. With money tight, they land jobs with mill foreman Jerry Maddox, an overbearing brute who runs roughshod over the town's residents and takes advantage of Liz's trusting nature, with devastating results. (*Abbr. from Booklist*)

The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants by Ann Brashares - (290 p.) – 17 copies

Carmen got the jeans at a thrift shop. They didn't look all that great: they were worn, dirty, and speckled with bleach. On the night before she and her friends part for the summer, Carmen decides to toss them. But Tibby says they're great. She'd love to have them. Lena and Bridget also think they're fabulous. Lena decides that they should all try them on. Whoever they fit best will get them. Nobody knows why, but the pants fit everyone perfectly. Even Carmen (who never thinks she looks good in anything) thinks she looks good in the pants. Over a few bags of cheese puffs, they decide to form a sisterhood and take the vow of the Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants . . . the next morning, they say good-bye. And then the journey of the pants — and the most memorable summer of their lives — begins. (*Goodreads.com*)

Snow Flower and the Secret Fan - by Lisa See - (288 p.) – 22 copies + audio (CD) + Large Print

In nineteenth-century China, in a remote Hunan county, a girl named Lily, at the tender age of seven, is paired with a laotong, an “old same,” in an emotional match that will last a lifetime. The laotong, Snow Flower, introduces herself by sending Lily a silk fan on which she's written a poem in nu shu, a unique language that Chinese women created in order to communicate in secret, away from the influence of men. As the years pass, Lily and Snow Flower send messages on the fan and compose stories on handkerchiefs, reaching out of isolation to share their hopes, dreams, and accomplishments. Together they endure the agony of footbinding and reflect upon their arranged marriages, their loneliness, and the joys and tragedies of motherhood. The two find solace in their friendship, developing a bond that keeps their spirits alive. But when a misunderstanding arises, their relationship suddenly threatens to tear apart. (*Amazon.com*)

The Soldier's Wife – by Margaret Leroy – (392 p.) – 12 copies + Large Print

As World War II draws closer and closer to Guernsey, Vivienne de la Mare knows that there will be sacrifices to be made. Not just for herself, but for her two young daughters and for her mother-in-law, for whom she cares while her husband is away fighting. What she does not expect is that she will fall in love with one of the enigmatic German soldiers who take up residence in the house next door to her home. As their relationship intensifies, so do the pressures on Vivienne. Food and resources grow scant, and the restrictions placed upon the residents of the island grow with each passing week. Though Vivienne knows the perils of her love affair with Gunther, she believes that she can keep their relationship and her family safe. But when she becomes aware of the full brutality of the Occupation, she must decide if she is willing to risk her personal happiness for the life of a stranger. (*Goodreads.com*)

Specimen Days – by Michael Cunningham - (336 p.) - 16 copies + audio (CD)

In each section of this bold new novel, we encounter the same group of characters: a young boy, a man, and a woman. "In the Machine" is a ghost story that takes place at the height of the industrial revolution as human beings confront the alienating realities of the new machine age. "The Children's Crusade," set in the early twenty-first century, plays with the conventions of the noir thriller as it tracks the pursuit of a terrorist band that is detonating bombs, seemingly at random, around the city. The third part, "Like Beauty," evokes a New York 150 years into the future, when the city is all but overwhelmed by refugees from the first inhabited planet to be contacted by the people of Earth. (*Amazon.com*)

Still Alice – by Lisa Genova - (293 p.) – 32 copies + audio (CD) + Large Print

Alice Howland is proud of the life she worked so hard to build. At fifty years old, she's a cognitive psychology professor at Harvard and a world-renowned expert in linguistics with a successful husband and three grown children. When she becomes increasingly disoriented and forgetful, a tragic diagnosis changes her life—and her relationship with her family and the world—forever. (*Amazon.com*)

The Story of Edgar Sawtelle – by David Wroblewski - (608 p.) –19 copies

Born mute, speaking only in sign, Edgar Sawtelle leads an idyllic life with his parents on their farm in remote northern Wisconsin. For generations, the Sawtelles have raised and trained a fictional breed of dog whose remarkable gift for companionship is epitomized by Almondine, Edgar's lifelong friend and ally. Edgar seems poised to carry on his family's traditions, but when catastrophe strikes, he finds his once-peaceful home engulfed in turmoil. Forced to flee into the vast wilderness lying beyond the Sawtelle farm, Edgar comes of age in the wild, fighting for his survival and that of the three yearling dogs who accompany him, until the day he is forced to choose between leaving forever or returning home to confront the mysteries he has left unsolved. (*Amazon.com*)

The Storyteller – by Jodi Picoult – (460 p.) – 13 copies

Author of other titles in our collection including Handle with Care and My Sister's Keeper

Sage Singer is a baker. She works through the night, preparing the day's breads and pastries, trying to escape a reality of loneliness, bad memories, and the shadow of her mother's death. When Josef Weber, an elderly man in Sage's grief support group, begins stopping by the bakery, they strike up an unlikely friendship. Despite their differences, they see in each other the hidden scars that others can't. Everything changes on the day that Josef confesses a long-buried and shameful secret and asks Sage for an extraordinary favor. If she says yes, she faces not only moral repercussions, but potentially legal ones as well. With the integrity of the closest friend she's ever had clouded, Sage begins to question the assumptions and expectations she's made about her life and her family. This novel explores the lengths to which we will go in order to keep the past from dictating the future. (*Amazon.com*)

Sunday's Silence – by Gina B. Nahai – (309 p.) – 20 copies

The mesmerizing story of a journalist's search for the truth about his father's death -- and his own past -- among the mystical, snake-handling Holy Rollers of Appalachia. When Adam Watkins, illegitimate son of ninety-year-old preacher Little Sam Jenkins, learns that his father has died from a snakebite and that a woman named Blue, a fellow handler, is being charged with murder, Adam abandons his assignment in Lebanon and goes home for the first time in twenty years. Almost immediately, he is drawn into a dark and exhilarating relationship with the purple-eyed beauty Blue. Carried to Appalachia from the mountains of Asia as the child bride of a languages professor, she is both outsider and enigma. (*Amazon.com*)

Sweet Hereafter - by Russell Banks - (272 p.) – 18 copies

In a small U.S. town near Canada, four vivid, sensitive souls are linked by a school-bus tragedy: the bus driver; the Vietnam vet who was driving behind the bus, waving at his kids, when it went off the road; the negligence lawyer who tries to shape the victims' heartaches into a winning case; and the beauty-queen cheerleader crippled by the crash, whose testimony will determine everyone's fate. (*Goodreads.com*)

The Sweetest Dream – by Doris Lessing - (496 p.) - 13 copies

Frances Lennox ladles out dinner every night to the motley, exuberant, youthful crew assembled around her hospitable table: her two sons and their friends, girlfriends, ex-friends, and fresh-off-the-street friends. It's the early 1960s and certainly "everything is for the best in the best of all possible worlds." However financial circumstances demand that Frances and her sons live with her proper ex-mother-in-law. In addition, her ex-husband, Comrade Johnny, has just dumped his second wife's problem child at Frances's feet, and the world's political landscape has suddenly become surreal beyond imagination.... (*Edited from Amazon.com*)

The Talented Mr. Ripley - by Patricia Highsmith - (288 p.) – 16 copies

Since his debut in 1955, Tom Ripley has evolved into the ultimate bad boy sociopath. Here, in this first Ripley novel, we are introduced to suave Tom Ripley, a young striver, newly arrived in the heady world of Manhattan. A product of a broken home, branded a "sissy" by his dismissive Aunt Dottie, Ripley meets a wealthy industrialist who hires him to bring his playboy son, Dickie Greenleaf, back from gallivanting in Italy. Soon Ripley's fascination with Dickie's debonair lifestyle turns obsessive as he finds himself enraged by Dickie's ambivalent affections for Marge, a charming American dilettante. (*Amazon.com*)

The Tenth Circle – by Jodi Picoult – (385 p.) – 12 copies + audio (CD)

Author of other titles in our collection including Handle with Care and My Sister's Keeper

Fourteen-year-old Trixie Stone is in love for the first time. She's also the light of her father, Daniel's life -- a straight-A student; a pretty, popular freshman in high school; a girl who's always seen her father as a hero. That is, until her world is turned upside down with a single act of violence. Suddenly everything Trixie has believed about her family -- and herself -- seems to be a lie. Could the boyfriend who once made Trixie wild with happiness have been the one to end her childhood forever? She says that he is, and that is all it takes to make Daniel, a seemingly mild-mannered comic book artist with a secret tumultuous past he has hidden even from his family, venture to hell and back to protect his daughter. This novel explores the unbreakable bond between parent and child, and questions whether you can reinvent yourself in the course of a lifetime -- or if your mistakes are carried forever. (*Amazon.com*)

Those Who Save Us – by Jenna Blum - (496 p.) - 17 copies

For fifty years, Anna Schlemmer has refused to talk about her life in Germany during World War II. Her daughter, Trudy, was only three when she and her mother were liberated by an American soldier and went to live with him in Minnesota. Trudy's sole evidence of the past is an old photograph: a family portrait showing Anna, Trudy, and a Nazi officer, the Obersturmfuhrer of Buchenwald. Driven by the guilt of her heritage, Trudy, now a professor of German history, begins investigating the past and finally unearths the dramatic and heartbreaking truth of her mother's life. (*Amazon.com*)

A Thousand Splendid Suns – by Khaled Hosseini - (372 p.) – 22 copies

Author of The Kite Runner and As the Mountains Echoed, other titles in our collection

Like its predecessor *The Kite Runner*, this story uses the tumultuous backdrop of war-torn Afghanistan to render the heroic plight of two people. Born a generation apart and with very different ideas about love and family, Mariam and Laila are two women brought jarringly together by war, by loss and by fate. As they endure the ever escalating dangers around them-in their home as well as in the streets of Kabul-they come to form a bond that makes them both sisters and mother-daughter to each other, and that will ultimately alter the course not just of their own lives but of the next generation. With heart-wrenching power and suspense, Hosseini shows how a woman's love for her family can move her to shocking and heroic acts of self-sacrifice, and that in the end it is love, or even the memory of love, that is often the key to survival. (**Source??**)

Three Junes -- by Julia Glass – (353 p.) – 12 copies + Audio CD

Paul McLeod, a Scottish newspaper owner, longs for the Greek isles to escape his loneliness since the death of his wife. Of his three sons, Fenno is the most reticent, having left Scotland to pursue a life in New York, where his homosexuality would blend into the backdrop of the diversified city. The second part of the story brings Fenno and his twin brothers and their wives together for the funeral of their father, who has died in Greece. Many undercurrents and emotions run through this mesmerizing novel, which essentially deals with human complexity and how people shape one another, deliberately and sometimes by chance. Brimming with a marvelous cast of intricate characters set in an assortment of scintillating backdrops, Glass's philosophically introspective novel is highly intelligent and well written. (*From Booklist*)

The Time Traveler's Wife – by Audrey Niffenegger - (546 p.) – 18 copies + audio (cassette)

A most untraditional love story, this is the celebrated tale of Henry DeTamble, a dashing, adventuresome librarian who inadvertently travels through time, and Clare Abshire, an artist whose life takes a natural sequential course. Henry and Clare's passionate affair endures across a sea of time and captures them in an impossibly romantic trap that tests the strength of fate and basks in the bonds of love.

Tortilla Curtain – by T. C. Boyle - (355 p.) - 15 copies

Topanga Canyon is home to two couples on a collision course. Los Angeles liberals Delaney and Kyra Mossbacher lead an ordered sushi-and-recycling existence in a newly gated hilltop community: he a sensitive nature writer, she an obsessive realtor. Mexican illegals Candido and America Rincon desperately cling to their vision of the American Dream as they fight off starvation in a makeshift camp deep in the ravine. And from the moment a freak accident brings Candido and Delaney into intimate contact, these four and their opposing worlds gradually intersect in what becomes a tragicomedy of error and misunderstanding. (*Amazon.com*)

A Tree Grows in Brooklyn -- by Betty Smith – (493 p.) – 13 copies

Francie Nolan, avid reader, penny-candy connoisseur, and adroit observer of human nature, has much to ponder in colorful, turn-of-the-century Brooklyn. She grows up with a sweet, tragic father, a severely realistic mother, and an aunt who gives her love too freely--to men, and to a brother who will always be the favored child. Francie learns early the meaning of hunger and the value of a penny. She is her father's child--romantic and hungry for beauty. But she is her mother's child, too--deeply practical and in constant need of truth. Like the Tree of Heaven that grows out of cement or through cellar gratings, resourceful Francie struggles against all odds to survive and thrive. Betty Smith's poignant, honest novel created a big stir when it was first published over 50 years ago. Her frank writing about life's squalor was alarming to some of the more genteel society, but the book's humor and pathos ensured its place in the realm of classics--and in the hearts of readers, young and old. *(From Amazon.com Review - Emilie Coulter)*

Turn of Mind – by Alice LaPlante – (307 p.) - 20 copies

Dr. Jennifer White's best friend, Amanda, has been killed, and four fingers surgically removed from her hand. Dr. White is the prime suspect and she herself doesn't know whether she did it. Told in White's own voice, fractured and eloquent, a picture emerges of the surprisingly intimate, complex alliance between these life-long friends—two proud, forceful women who were at times each other's most formidable adversaries. As the investigation into the murder deepens and White's relationships with her live-in caretaker and two grown children intensify, a chilling question lingers: is White's shattered memory preventing her from revealing the truth or helping her hide it? *(Amazon.com)*

The Uncommon Reader: A Novella – by Alan Bennett - (128 p.) - 16 copies + audio (CD) + Large Print

When her corgis stray into a mobile library parked near Buckingham Palace, the Queen feels duty-bound to borrow a book. Discovering the joy of reading widely (from J. R. Ackerley, Jean Genet, and Ivy Compton-Burnett to the classics) and intelligently, she finds that her view of the world changes dramatically. Abetted in her newfound obsession by Norman, a young man from the royal kitchens, the Queen comes to question the prescribed order of the world and loses patience with the routines of her role as monarch. Her new passion for reading initially alarms the palace staff and soon leads to surprising and very funny consequences for the country at large. *(Amazon.com)*

Vanishing Acts -- by Jodi Picoult – (418 p.) – 13 copies

Delia Hopkins was six years old when her father allowed her to be his assistant in the amateur magic act he performed at the local senior center's annual Christmas pageant. "I learned a lot that night," recalls Delia, who is now 32, at the start of Picoult's absorbing new novel... "That people don't vanish into thin air...." As she prepares for her wedding, however, Delia has a flash of memory that is so vivid yet so wildly out-of-place among the other memories from her idyllic New Hampshire upbringing that she describes it to a childhood friend, who happens to be a reporter. Soon, her whole world and the world of the widowed father she adores is turned upside down. Her marriage to her toddler's father, a loving but still struggling recovering alcoholic, is put on hold as she is forced to conduct a search-and-rescue mission on her own past and identity. It will cut to the heart of what she holds to be true and good. *(Abbr. from Publishers Weekly)*

Water for Elephants – by Sara Gruen - (350 p.) - 39 copies + audio (CD, Playaway)

Though he may not speak of them, the memories still dwell inside Jacob Jankowski's ninety-something-year-old mind. Memories of himself as a young man tossed by fate onto a rickety train, home to the Benzini Brothers Most Spectacular Show on Earth. Memories of a world filled with wonder and pain and anger and passion; a world with its own way of life...and its own way of death. The world of the circus: to Jacob it was both salvation and a living hell. Jacob was there because his luck had run out and, orphaned and penniless, he had no direction until he landed on this locomotive "ship of fools." It was the early part of the Great Depression, and everyone in this third-rate circus was lucky to have any job at all. Marlena, the star of the equestrian act, was there because she fell in love with the wrong man, a handsome circus boss with a wide mean streak. And Rosie the elephant was there because she was the great gray hope, the new act that was going to be the salvation of the circus; the only problem was, Rosie didn't have an act - in fact, she couldn't even follow instructions. The bond that grew among this unlikely trio was one of love and trust, and ultimately, it was their only hope for survival. *(Amazon.com)*

What We Keep – by Elizabeth Berg - (272 p.) - 15 copies

Ginny Young is on a plane, en route to see her mother, whom she hasn't seen or spoken to for thirty-five years. She thinks back to the summer of 1958, when she and her sister, Sharla, were young girls. At that time, a series of dramatic events -- beginning with the arrival of a mysterious and sensual next-door neighbor -- divided the family, separating the sisters from their mother. Moving back and forth in time between the girl she once was and the woman she's become, Ginny at last confronts painful choices that occur in almost any woman's life, and learns surprising truths about the people she thought she knew best. (*Amazon.com*)

When the Emperor Was Divine - by Julie Otsuka - (144 p.) - 18 copies + audio (CD)

On a sunny day in Berkeley, California, in 1942, a woman sees a sign in a post office window, returns to her home, and matter-of-factly begins to pack her family's possessions. Like thousands of other Japanese Americans they have been reclassified, virtually overnight, as enemy aliens and are about to be uprooted from their home and sent to a dusty internment camp in the Utah desert. (*Amazon.com*)

Wicked: Life and Times of the Wicked Witch of the West - by Gregory Maguire - (448 p.) - 22 copies+audio(CD)

Wicked is about a land where animals talk and strive to be treated like first-class citizens, Munchkinlanders seek the comfort of middle-class stability, and the Tin Man becomes a victim of domestic violence. And then there is the little green-skinned girl named Elphaba, who will grow up to become the infamous Wicked Witch of the West, a smart, prickly, and misunderstood creature who challenges all our preconceived notions about the nature of good and evil. An astonishingly rich re-creation of the land of Oz, this book retells the story of Elphaba, the Wicked Witch of the West, who wasn't so wicked after all. When Dorothy triumphed over the Wicked Witch of the West in L. Frank Baum's classic tale, we heard only her side of the story. But what about her arch-nemesis, the mysterious witch? Where did she come from? How did she become so wicked? And what is the true nature of evil? (*Goodreads.com*)

The Women - by T.C. Boyle - (464 p.) – 18 copies

An account of Frank Lloyd Wright's life, as told through the experiences of the four women who loved him, blazes with wit and invention. Wright's life was one long howling struggle against the bonds of convention, whether aesthetic, social, moral, or romantic. He never did what was expected and despite the overblown scandals surrounding his amours and very public divorces and the financial disarray that dogged him throughout his career, he never let anything get in the way of his larger-than-life appetites and visions. Wright's triumphs and defeats were always tied to the women he loved: the Montenegrin beauty Olgivanna Milanoff; the passionate Southern belle Maud Miriam Noel; the spirited Mamah Cheney, tragically killed; and his young first wife, Kitty Tobin. In *The Women*, T.C. Boyle's protean voice captures these very different women and, in doing so, creates a masterful ode to the creative life in all its complexity and grandeur. (*Goodreads.com*)

NONFICTION, MEMOIRS, ETC.

Barrio Boy – by Ernesto Galarza - (275 p.) - 17 copies

Galarza's saga begins in Jalcoctán, a mountain village just south of where the Gulf of California joins the Pacific. When the turmoil precipitated by the Mexican Revolution begins to escalate, the family leaves their tiny village in search of safety and work in a nearby city. Subsequent moves introduce the boy to the growing turbulence of the Revolution and the uncertainties of city life. He experiences firsthand the difficulties in finding work in a strife-torn nation, securing an education, and keeping a close-knit family intact. When his family finally settles in Sacramento, young Ernesto encounters new experiences and influences that will forever shape his outlook and broaden his horizons. (*Goodreads.com*)

The Big Burn: Teddy Roosevelt and the Fire that Saved America by Timothy Egan – by Timothy Egan – (283 p.)- 15 copies

On the afternoon of August 20, 1910, a battering ram of wind moved through the drought-stricken national forests of Washington, Idaho, and Montana, whipping the hundreds of small blazes burning across the forest floor into a roaring inferno. Forest rangers had assembled nearly ten thousand men—college boys, day workers, immigrants from mining camps—to fight the fire. But no living person had seen anything like those flames, and neither the rangers nor anyone else knew how to subdue them. Egan narrates the struggles of the overmatched rangers against the implacable fire with unstoppable dramatic force. Equally dramatic is the larger story he tells of outsized president Teddy Roosevelt and his chief forester, Gifford Pinchot. Pioneering the notion of conservation, Roosevelt and Pinchot did nothing less than create the idea of public land as our national treasure, owned by and preserved for every citizen. (*Goodreads*)

The Big Year: A Tale of Man, Nature, and Fowl Obsession - by Mark Obmascik - (272 p.) - 16 copies

Every January 1, a quirky crowd storms out across North America for a spectacularly competitive event called a Big Year—a grand, expensive, and occasionally vicious 365-day marathon of birdwatching. For three men in particular, 1998 would become a grueling battle for a new North American birding record. Bouncing from coast to coast on frenetic pilgrimages for once-in-a-lifetime rarities, they brave broiling deserts, bug-infested swamps, and some of the lumpiest motel mattresses known to man. This unprecedented year of beat-the-clock adventures ultimately leads one man to a record so gigantic that it is unlikely ever to be bested. Here, prizewinning journalist Mark Obmascik creates a dazzling, fun narrative of the 275,000-mile odyssey of these three obsessives as they fight to win the greatest— or maybe worst—birding contest of all time. (*Amazon.com*)

Blue as the Lake – by Robert B. Stepto - (204 p.) - 14 copies

Blue as the Lake maps out an African-American landscape unique in our literature. From Idlewild, the black resort near Lake Michigan where the young Robert Stepto vacationed with his grandparents, to Oak Bluffs on Martha's Vineyard, the author traces a history of generations finding and making a home. His family lore careens through American history- we meet a black regiment in World War I; legendary jazz musician Coleman Hawkins, and Inabel Burns, pioneering feminist and great-granddaughter of slaves. (*Amazon.com*)

The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind – by William Kamkwamba and Bryan Mealer – (372 p.) – 15 copies + 2 Large Print

William Kamkwamba was born in Malawi, a country where magic ruled and modern science was mystery. It was also a land withered by drought and hunger, and a place where hope and opportunity were hard to find. William had read about windmills, he dreamed of building one that would bring electricity and water to his village and was determined to show them what a little grit and ingenuity could do. But when his country was stricken with a famine that left his family's farm devastated, William was forced to drop out of school and help his family forage for food as thousands across the country starved and died. Yet William refused to let go of his dreams. With nothing more than a fistful of cornmeal in his stomach, a small pile of once-forgotten science textbooks, and an armory of curiosity and determination, he embarked on a daring plan to bring his family a set of luxuries that only two percent of Malawians could afford and what the West considers a necessity—electricity and running water. Soon, news of William's *magetsi a mphepo*—his "electric wind"—spread beyond the borders of his home, and the boy who was once called crazy became an inspiration to those around the world. (*Abridged from Goodreads.com*)

The Boys in the Boat: Nine Americans and Their Epic Quest for Gold at the 1936 Berlin Olympics – by Daniel James Brown – (370 p.) – 12 copies + audio (CD)

It was an unlikely quest from the start. With a team composed of the sons of loggers, shipyard workers, and farmers, the University of Washington's eight-oar crew team was never expected to defeat the elite teams of the East Coast and Great Britain, yet they did, going on to shock the world by defeating the German team rowing for Adolf Hitler. The emotional heart of the tale lies with Joe Rantz, a teenager without family or prospects, who rows not only to regain his shattered self-regard but also to find a real place for himself in the world. Drawing on the boys' own journals and vivid memories of a once-in-a-lifetime shared dream, this is an unforgettable portrait of an era, a celebration of a remarkable achievement, and a chronicle of one extraordinary young man's personal quest. An irresistible story about beating the odds and finding hope in the most desperate of times—the improbable account of how nine working-class boys from the American West showed the world at the 1936 Olympics in Berlin what true grit really meant. (*Amazon*)

Don't Let's Go to the Dogs Tonight – by Alexandra Fuller - (315 p.) - 16 copies

From 1972 to 1990, Alexandra Fuller—known to friends and family as Bobo—grew up on several farms in southern and central Africa. Her father joined up on the side of the white government in the Rhodesian civil war, and was often away fighting against the powerful black guerilla factions. Her mother, in turn, flung herself at their African life and its rugged farm work with the same passion and maniacal energy she brought to everything else. Though she loved her children, she was no hand-holder and had little tolerance for neediness. She nurtured her daughters in other ways: She taught them, by example, to be resilient and self-sufficient, to have strong wills and strong opinions, and to embrace life wholeheartedly, despite and because of difficult circumstances. And she instilled in Bobo, particularly, a love of reading and of storytelling that proved to be her salvation. (*Amazon.com*)

Down These Mean Streets – by Piri Thomas - (340 p.) - 16 copies

Thirty years ago Piri Thomas made literary history with this lacerating, lyrical memoir of his coming of age on the streets of Spanish Harlem. Here was the testament of a born outsider: a Puerto Rican in English-speaking America; a dark-skinned morenito in a family that refused to acknowledge its African blood. Here was an unsparing document of Thomas's plunge into the deadly consolations of drugs, street fighting, and armed robbery--a descent that ended when the twenty-two-year-old Piri was sent to prison for shooting a cop. As he recounts the journey that took him from adolescence in El Barrio to a lock-up in Sing Sing to the freedom that comes of self-acceptance, faith, and inner confidence, Piri Thomas gives us a book that is as exultant as it is harrowing and whose every page bears the irrepressible rhythm of its author's voice. (*Amazon.com*)

Dreams from My Father – by Barack Obama - (480 p.) – 16 copies + 2 audio (abridged CD) + Large Print

In this compelling memoir the son of a black African father and a white American mother searches for meaning to his life as a black American. It begins in New York, where Barack Obama learns that his father—a figure he knows more as a myth than as a man—has been killed in a car accident. This sudden death inspires an emotional odyssey—first to a small town in Kansas, from which he retraces the migration of his mother's family to Hawaii, and then to Kenya, where he meets the African side of his family, confronts the bitter truth of his father's life, and at last reconciles his divided inheritance. (*Amazon.com*)

Eagle Feathers and Angel Wings - by Shelley Muniz - (260 p.) - 15 copies

The Chase family, Shelley and Del and sons, Micah and Nick, lived in the home they had built in the foothills of Central California amidst Manzanita, cedars and pine. Happy and healthy, the family worked, romped and played in their hilltop paradise where homegrown food and family rituals were the norm. All of that changed in the summer of 1991 when twelve-year-old Micah was diagnosed with acute myelocytic leukemia. What followed was a nightmarish battle waged not only in Micah's young body but also on fronts unimaginable and unconscionable. Narrated by his mother, *Eagle Feathers and Angel Wings* chronicles Micah's courage. This inspiring remembrance is the documentation of a family's love, their efforts to find answers for Micah, and a resolution to his pain even after his death. *Eagle Feathers and Angel Wings* is much more than a story of loss. It is a story about living. (*Amazon.com*)

Eat, Pray, Love: One Woman's Search for Everything across Italy, India and Indonesia - by Elizabeth Gilbert - (352 p.) - 34 copies + audio (CD) + Large Print

In her early thirties, Elizabeth Gilbert had everything a modern American woman was supposed to want—husband, country home, successful career—but instead of feeling happy and fulfilled, she was consumed by panic and confusion. This wise and rapturous book is the story of how she left behind all these outward marks of success, and set out to explore three different aspects of her nature, against the backdrop of three different cultures: pleasure in Italy, devotion in India, and on the Indonesian island of Bali, a balance between worldly enjoyment and divine transcendence. (*Amazon.com*)

Epitaph for a Peach - by David Mas Masumoto - (233 p.) - 30 copies

As pleasurable as a perfect peach, *Epitaph for a Peach* tells the passionate story of one farmer's attempt to rescue one of the last truly sweet and juicy fruits from becoming obsolete in a world that increasingly values commerciality over quality. The story of Mas Masumoto's Sun Crest peaches begins on the day he turns the bulldozers away from his orchards and vows to give himself four seasons to find a home for the fruits of his labor. At once a deeply personal story, a sharp commentary about the state of American agriculture, a lighthearted rhapsody of nature, and an intimate glimpse into the Asian American experience, *Epitaph for a Peach* is about saving a peach, saving a farm, saving a family, saving a way of life—it is a story about finding "home." (*masumoto.com*)

Free for All - by Don Borchert - (210 p.) – 14 copies

Not long ago, the public library was a place for the bookish, the eggheaded, and the studious—often seeking refuge from a loud, irrational, crude, outside world. Today, libraries have become free-for-all entertainment complexes. Lockdowns and chaperones are often necessary. What happened? Don Borchert was a short-order cook, door-to-door salesman, telemarketer, and Christmas-tree-chopper before landing a job in a California library. He never could have predicted his encounters with the colorful kooks, touching adolescents, threatening bullies, and tricksters who fill the pages of this hilarious memoir. He offers readers a ringside seat for the unlikely spectacle of mayhem and absurdity that is business as usual at the public library—cops bust drug dealers who've set up shop in the men's restroom, a burka-wearing employee suffers a curse-ridden nervous breakdown, and a lonely, kid who grew up in the library and still sends postcards to his surrogate parents—the librarians. In fact, from the first page to the last, you'll learn everything about the world of the modern-day library that you never expected. (*Amazon.com*)

French Lessons: Adventures with Knife, Fork, and Corkscrew – by Peter Mayle - (240 p.) - 15 copies

Peter Mayle, francophile phenomenon and author of *A Year in Provence*, brings another delightful (and delicious) account of the good life, this time exploring the gustatory pleasures to be found throughout France. The French celebrate food and drink more than any other people, and Mayle shows us just how contagious their enthusiasm can be. We attend a truly French marathon, where the beverage of choice is Chateau Lafite-Rothschild rather than Gatorade. We search out the most pungent cheese in France, and eavesdrop on a heated debate on the perfect way to prepare an omelet. With Mayle as our inimitably charming guide, we come away with a satisfied smile (if a little hungry) and the compelling desire to book a flight to France at once. (*Amazon.com*)

Galileo's Daughter: A Historical Memoir of Science, Faith, and Love –by Dava Sobel - (432 p.) - 21 copies + 1 audio (cassette)

Moving between Galileo's grand public life and Maria Celeste's sequestered world, Sobel illuminates the Florence of the Medicis and the papal court in Rome during the pivotal era when humanity's perception of its place in the cosmos was about to be overturned. During that same time, while the bubonic plague wreaked its terrible devastation and the Thirty Years' War tipped fortunes across Europe, Galileo sought to reconcile the Heaven he revered as a good Catholic with the heavens he revealed through his telescope. Filled with human drama and scientific adventure, *Galileo's Daughter* is an unforgettable story. (*Amazon.com*)

The Glass Castle: a Memoir - by Jeannette Walls - (288 p.) – 15 copies

Jeannette Walls grew up with parents whose ideals and stubborn nonconformity were both their curse and their salvation. In the beginning, they lived like nomads. Rex was a charismatic, brilliant man who, when sober, captured his children's imagination, teaching them physics, geology, and above all, how to embrace life fearlessly. Later, the Walls retreated to the dismal West Virginia mining town—and the family—Rex Walls had done everything he could to escape. Jeannette and her brother and sisters had to fend for themselves, supporting one another as they weathered their parents' betrayals and, finally, found the resources and will to leave home. Jeannette's is a story of triumph against all odds, but also a tender, moving tale of unconditional love in a family that despite its profound flaws gave her the fiery determination to carve out a successful life on her own terms. (*Amazon.com*)

Good Good Pig – by Sy Montgomery - (245 p.) - 15 copies + Large Print

A naturalist who spent months at a time living on her own among wild creatures in remote jungles, Sy Montgomery had always felt more comfortable with animals than with people. So she gladly opened her heart to a sick piglet who had been crowded away from nourishing meals by his stronger siblings. Yet Sy had no inkling that this piglet, later named Christopher Hogwood, would not only survive but flourish—and she soon found herself engaged with her small-town community in ways she had never dreamed possible. Unexpectedly, Christopher provided this peripatetic traveler with something she had sought all her life: an anchor (weighing 750 pounds) to family and home. (*Amazon*)

Hemingway Book Club of Kosovo - by Paula Huntley - (255 p.) - 17 copies

In 1999, the world watched as more than 800,000 Kosovo Albanians poured over Kosovo's borders, bringing with them stories of torture, rape, and massacre. One year later, Paula Huntley's husband signed on to help build a modern legal system in the broken country and she reluctantly agreed to accompany him. Deeply uncertain as to how she might be of any service, Huntley found a position teaching English as a Second Language to a group of Kosovo Albanians. When Huntley asked her students if they would like to form an American-style "book club," they jumped at the idea. After stumbling upon a stray English-language copy of Ernest Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea*, Huntley proposed it as the club's first selection. The simple fable touched all the students deeply, and the club rapidly became a forum in which they could discuss both the terrors of their past and their dreams for the future. (*Amazon*)

The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks – by Rebecca Skloot - (369 p.) – 32 copies + audio (CD) + Large Print

Her name was Henrietta Lacks, but scientists know her as HeLa. She was a poor black tobacco farmer whose cells—taken without her knowledge in 1951—became one of the most important tools in medicine, vital for developing the polio vaccine, cloning, gene mapping, and more. Henrietta's cells have been bought and sold by the billions, yet she remains virtually unknown, and her family can't afford health insurance. This phenomenal New York Times bestseller tells a riveting story of the collision between ethics, race, and medicine; of scientific discovery and faith healing; and of a daughter consumed with questions about the mother she never knew. (*Amazon.com*)

Last Child in the Woods – by Richard Louv - (334 p.) - 15 copies

Child advocacy expert Louv directly links the lack of nature in the lives of today's wired generation – he calls it nature deficit – to some of the most disturbing childhood trends, such as rises in obesity, attention deficit disorder (ADD), and depression. He maintains that direct exposure to nature is essential for healthy childhood development – physical, emotional, and spiritual. Parents have the power to ensure that their daughter or son will not be the “last child in the woods” - this book is the first step toward nature-child reunion. (*Jacket notes*)

Mapmaker's Wife -- by Robert Whitaker – (352 p.) – 12 copies

Whitaker merges a gripping account of scientific exploration with an amazing story of survival in the wilderness. The best minds of Europe in the 1730s knew that the Earth was not perfectly round, but the exact size and shape were in hot debate. Someone figured out that to nail down the answer certain data was needed, and that the best place to get that data was at the equator. A scientific expedition was organized in Paris and sent to the New World in 1735. After 10 years of incredible hardships and setbacks, it accomplished its mission (and a host of other enlightenments along the way). As captivating as this story proved to be, another developed: a young member of the party met, fell in love with, and married an upper-class, 13-year-old Peruvian girl. Due to a tangled swirl of unfortunate events, this couple became separated for 20 years. Finally, in 1769, Isabel Gramesón set off on a trek through the most inhospitable of jungles to rejoin her husband in French Guiana. The author's depiction of that harrowing journey is the crowning jewel of this outstanding volume. (*Abbr. from School Library Journal*)

The Memory Palace – by Mira Bartok - (305 p.) – 18 copies + audio (CD)

“People have abandoned their loved ones for much less than you’ve been through,” Mira Bartók is told at her mother’s memorial service. It is a poignant observation about the relationship between Mira, her sister, and their mentally ill mother. Before she was struck with schizophrenia at the age of nineteen, beautiful piano protégé Norma Herr had been the most vibrant personality in the room. When the girls left for college, Norma called them obsessively, appeared at their apartments or jobs, threatened to kill herself if they did not return home. After a traumatic encounter, Mira and her sister were left with no choice but to change their names and sever all contact with Norma in order to stay safe. But while Mira pursued her career as an artist, the haunting memories of her mother were never far away. Then a debilitating car accident changes Mira’s life forever and she struggles to recover from a traumatic brain injury. In her search for a way back to her lost self, Mira reached out to the homeless shelter where she believed her mother was living and Mira and her sister share an extraordinary reconciliation with their mother that none of them had thought possible. (*Abridged from Amazon.com*)

Mennonite in a Little Black Dress - by Rhoda Janzen - (241 p.) – 13 copies

Not long after Rhoda Janzen turned forty, her world turned upside down. It was bad enough that her husband of fifteen years left her for Bob, a guy he met on Gay.com, but that same week a car accident left her injured. Needing a place to rest and pick up the pieces of her life, Rhoda packed her bags, crossed the country, and returned to her quirky Mennonite family’s home, where she was welcomed back with open arms and offbeat advice. (Rhoda’s good-natured mother suggested she get over her heartbreak by dating her first cousin—he owned a tractor, see.) Written with wry humor and huge personality—and tackling faith, love, family, and aging—*Mennonite in a Little Black Dress* is an immensely moving memoir of healing, certain to touch anyone who has ever had to look homeward in order to move ahead. (*Amazon.com*)

Omnivore’s Dilemma – by Michael Pollan - (464 p.) - 15 copies + audio (CD) + Large Print

What should we have for dinner? Michael Pollan confronted us with this seemingly simple question and, with his brilliant and eye-opening exploration of our food choices, demonstrated that how we answer it today may determine not only our health but our survival as a species. Pollan’s revolutionary examination has changed the way Americans think about food. Bringing wide attention to the little-known but vitally important dimensions of food and agriculture in America, Pollan launched a national conversation about what we eat and the profound consequences that even the simplest everyday food choices have on both ourselves and the natural world. (*Amazon.com*)

The 101 Most Influential People Who Never Lived – by Allan Lazar, Dan Karlan, & Jeremy Salter - (317 p.) - 10 copies

From Santa Claus to Buffy the Vampire Slayer, from Uncle Sam to Uncle Tom, here is a compelling, eye-opening, and endlessly entertaining compendium of fictional trendsetters and world-shakers who have helped shape our culture and our lives. *The 101 Most Influential People Who Never Lived* offers fascinating histories of our most beloved, hated, feared, and revered invented icons and the indelible marks they made on civilization. (*Amazon.com*)

Persepolis – by Marjane Satrapi - (160 p.) - 13 copies

Wise, funny, and heartbreaking, *Persepolis* is Marjane Satrapi’s memoir of growing up in Iran during the Islamic Revolution. In powerful black-and-white comic strip images, Satrapi tells the story of her life in Tehran from ages six to fourteen, years that saw the overthrow of the Shah’s regime, the triumph of the Islamic Revolution, and the devastating effects of war with Iraq. The intelligent and outspoken only child of committed Marxists and the great-granddaughter of one of Iran’s last emperors, Marjane bears witness to a childhood uniquely entwined with the history of her country. (*Amazon.com*)

The Pianist – by Wladyslaw Szpilman - (224 p.) - 14 copies

On September 23, 1939, Wladyslaw Szpilman played Chopin’s Nocturne in C-sharp minor live on the radio as shells exploded outside—so loudly that he couldn’t hear his piano. It was the last live music broadcast from Warsaw: That day, a German bomb hit the station, and Polish Radio went off the air. Though he lost his entire family, Szpilman survived in hiding. In the end, his life was saved by a German officer who heard him play the same Chopin Nocturne on a piano found among the rubble. Written immediately after the war and suppressed for decades, *The Pianist* is a stunning testament to human endurance and the redemptive power of fellow feeling. (*Amazon.com*)

Reading Lolita in Tehran - by Azar Nafisi - (347 p.) – 19 copies

Every Thursday morning for two years in the Islamic Republic of Iran, Azar Nafisi, a bold and inspired teacher, secretly gathered seven of her most committed female students to read forbidden Western classics. Some came from conservative and religious families, others were progressive and secular; some had spent time in jail. They were shy and uncomfortable at first, unaccustomed to being asked to speak their minds, but soon they removed their veils and began to speak more freely—their stories intertwining with the novels they were reading by Jane Austen, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Henry James, and Vladimir Nabokov. As Islamic morality squads staged arbitrary raids in Tehran, as fundamentalists seized hold of the universities and a blind censor stifled artistic expression, the women in Nafisi's living room spoke not only of the books they were reading but also about themselves, their dreams and disappointments. This is a work of great passion and poetic beauty, a remarkable exploration of resilience in the face of tyranny, and a celebration of the liberating power of literature. (*Amazon.com*)

River of Doubt: Theodore Roosevelt's Darkest Journey – by Candice Millard - (432 p.) - 15 copies + audio (CD)

The River of Doubt—it is a black, uncharted tributary of the Amazon that snakes through one of the most treacherous jungles in the world. After his humiliating election defeat in 1912, Roosevelt set his sights on the most punishing physical challenge he could find, the first descent of an unmapped, rapids-choked tributary of the Amazon. Together with his son Kermit and Brazil's most famous explorer, Cândido Mariano da Silva Rondon, Roosevelt accomplished a feat so great that many at the time refused to believe it. In the process, he changed the map of the western hemisphere forever. Along the way, Roosevelt and his men faced an unbelievable series of hardships, losing their canoes and supplies, enduring starvation, attack, disease, and murder within their own ranks. Three men died, and Roosevelt was brought to the brink of suicide. *The River of Doubt* brings alive these extraordinary events in a powerful nonfiction narrative thriller that happens to feature one of the most famous Americans who ever lived. (*Amazon.com*)

Running With Scissors: a Memoir -- by Augusten Burroughs – (315 p.) – 14 copies

It's hard to imagine a childhood more disturbing and relentlessly surreal than the one the author describes in this memoir. When his violent, nearly homicidal parents divorce, young Augusten lives in Northampton, Massachusetts, with his mother, a confessional poet battling a mental illness that manifests itself in consuming self-absorption and psychotic episodes. Deciding she needs more space for personal exploration and art, Augusten's mother packs her 12-year-old son off to the home of psychiatrist Dr. Finch, a wildly eccentric egomaniac; most of this memoir centers on Augusten's teenage years spent in this uncontrolled, profoundly bizarre household. Luckily, Burroughs tempers the pathos with sharp, riotous humor in stories that are self-deprecating, raunchy, sexually explicit (14-year-old Augusten becomes lovers with Neil, a Finch family member 20 years his senior), scatological, grotesque, and deeply affecting. Edgier but reminiscent of Dave Eggers' *Heartbreaking Work of Staggering Genius* (2000), this is a survival story readers won't forget. (*From Gillian Engberg—Booklist Review*)

Same Kind of Different as Me – by Ron Hall and Denver Moore - (256 p.) – 16 copies + Large Print

Meet Denver, a man raised under plantation-style slavery in Louisiana in the 1960s; a man who escaped, hopping a train to wander, homeless, for eighteen years on the streets of Dallas, Texas. No longer a slave, Denver's life was still hopeless—until God moved. First came a godly woman who prayed, listened, and obeyed. And then came her husband, Ron, an international arts dealer at home in a world of Armani-suited millionaires. And then they all came together. But slavery takes many forms. Deborah discovers that she has cancer. In the face of possible death, she charges her husband to rescue Denver. Who will be saved, and who will be lost? What is the future for these unlikely three? This is the emotional tale of their story: a telling of pain and laughter, doubt and tears, dug out between the bondages of this earth and the free possibility of heaven. No reader or listener will ever forget it. (*Goodreads.com*)

Serendib – by Jim Toner - (215 p.) - 27 copies

When John Toner, a retired Cleveland judge, decided on a whim in April 1990 to spend a month with his son in war-torn Sri Lanka, he was as much a stranger to his seventh—and last—child as he was to the hardships of life in a Third World country. *Serendib* chronicles the journey that follows as a father and son who had never been alone together live in close quarters, in the poorest of conditions—and replace awkwardness and distance with understanding and love. Along the way John learns to eat with his fingers, bathe in a river alongside cows, and trade his wool trousers for a traditional sarong. John watches with awe as students learn without computers, books, or even paper and he bonds with Sri Lankan children. Each new experience pushes Toner's father to face his fears—and brings him closer to his youngest son. (*Amazon.com*) [Toner teaches at Columbia College in Tuolumne County.]

The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down - by Ann Fadiman - (341 p.) - 21 copies

This book explores the clash between a small county hospital in California and a refugee family from Laos over the care of Lia Lee, a Hmong child diagnosed with severe epilepsy. Lia's parents and her doctors both wanted what was best for Lia, but the lack of understanding between them led to tragedy. Anne Fadiman's compassionate account of this cultural impasse is literary journalism at its finest. The current edition, published for the book's fifteenth anniversary, includes a new afterword by the author that provides updates on the major characters along with reflections on how they have changed Fadiman's life and attitudes. (*Amazon.com*)

Strength in What Remains – by Tracy Kidder - (304 p.) – 15 copies + audio (CD) + Large Print

Tracy Kidder gives us the story of one man's inspiring American journey and of the ordinary people who helped him, providing brilliant testament to the power of second chances. Deo arrives in the United States from Burundi in search of a new life. Having survived a civil war and genocide, he lands at JFK airport with two hundred dollars, no English, and no contacts. He ekes out a precarious existence delivering groceries, living in Central Park, and learning English by reading dictionaries in bookstores. Then Deo begins to meet the strangers who will change his life, pointing him eventually in the direction of Columbia University, medical school, and a life devoted to healing. Kidder breaks new ground in telling this unforgettable story as he travels with Deo back over a turbulent life and shows us what it means to be fully human. (*Amazon.com*)

Tattoos on the Heart -- by Gregory Boyle – (212 p.) – 12 copies

In this artful, disquieting, yet surprisingly jubilant memoir, Jesuit priest Boyle recounts his two decades of working with homies in Los Angeles County, which contains 1,100 gangs with nearly 86,000 members. Boyle's Homeboy Industries is the largest gang intervention program in the country, offering job training, tattoo removal, and employment to members of enemy gangs. Effectively straddling the debate regarding where the responsibility for urban violence lies, Boyle both recounts the despair of watching the kids you love cooperate in their own demise and levels the challenge to readers to stand in awe at what the poor have to carry rather than stand in judgment at how they carry it. ... Boyle creates a convincing and even joyful treatise on the sacredness of every life. Considering that he has buried more than 150 young people from gang-related violence, the joyful tenor of the book remains an astounding literary and spiritual feat. (*Abbr. from Publishers Weekly*)

Team of Rivals: The Political Genius of Abraham Lincoln – by Doris Kearns Goodwin - (916 p.) – 16 copies + 1 LP + audio CD

Acclaimed historian Doris Kearns Goodwin illuminates Lincoln's political genius in this highly original work, as the one-term congressman and prairie lawyer rises from obscurity to prevail over three gifted rivals of national reputation to become president. On May 18, 1860, William H. Seward, Salmon P. Chase, Edward Bates, and Abraham Lincoln waited in their hometowns for the results from the Republican National Convention in Chicago. When Lincoln emerged as the victor, his rivals were angry. That Lincoln succeeded, Goodwin demonstrates, was the result of a character that had been forged by experiences that raised him above his more privileged and accomplished rivals. He won because he possessed an extraordinary ability to put himself in the place of other men, to experience what they were feeling, to understand their motives and desires. It was this capacity that enabled Lincoln as president to bring his disgruntled opponents together, create the most unusual cabinet in history, and marshal their talents to the task of preserving the Union and winning the war. We view the long, horrifying struggle from the vantage of the White House as Lincoln copes with incompetent generals, hostile congressmen, and his raucous cabinet. He overcomes these obstacles by winning the respect of his former competitors, and in the case of Seward, finds a loyal and crucial friend to see him through. (*Amazon.com*)

Tender at the Bone - by Ruth Reichl - (282 p.) - 18 copies

At an early age, Ruth Reichl discovered that "food could be a way of making sense of the world. . . . If you watched people as they ate, you could find out who they were." Her deliciously crafted memoir is the story of a life determined, enhanced, and defined in equal measure by a passion for food, unforgettable people, and the love of tales well told. Beginning with Reichl's mother, the notorious food-poisoner known as the Queen of Mold, Reichl introduces us to the fascinating characters who shaped her world and her tastes, from the gourmand who served Reichl her first soufflé, to those in Berkeley who championed the organic food revolution in the 1970s. (*Amazon.com*)

Three Cups of Tea – by Greg Mortenson - (368 p.) - 31 copies + audio (CD) + Large Print

The astonishing, uplifting story of a real-life Indiana Jones and his humanitarian campaign to use education to combat terrorism in the Taliban's backyard. Anyone who despairs of the individual's power to change lives has to read the story of Greg Mortenson, a homeless mountaineer who, following a 1993 climb of Pakistan's treacherous K2, was inspired by a chance encounter with impoverished mountain villagers and promised to build them a school. Over the next decade he built fifty-five schools—especially for girls—that offer a balanced education in one of the most isolated and dangerous regions on earth. As it chronicles Mortenson's quest, which has brought him into conflict with both enraged Islamists and uncomprehending Americans, *Three Cups of Tea* combines adventure with a celebration of the humanitarian spirit. (*Amazon.com*)

Tolstoy and the Purple Chair: My Year of Magical Reading - by Nina Sankovitch (222 p.) – 30 copies

Catalyzed by the loss of her sister to cancer, a mother of four spends one year savoring a great book every day, from Thomas Pynchon to Nora Ephron and beyond. In the tradition of Gretchen Rubin's *The Happiness Project* and Joan Dideon's *A Year of Magical Thinking*, Nina Sankovitch's soul-baring and literary-minded memoir is a chronicle of loss, hope, and redemption. Nina ultimately turns to reading as therapy and through her journey illuminates the power of books to help us reclaim our lives. (*Amazon.com*)

Unbroken: a World War II Story of Survival, Resilience, and Redemption - by Laura Hillenbrand - (406 p.) - 20 copies

In 1939, Louis Zamperini was training for his second Olympics, his eye on the once impossible 4 minute mile. His life stretched out before him, full of promise. Then the war began. The Olympics were cancelled. Pulled into conflict with the rest of the world, Louis enlisted in the Army Air Corps. The Corps sent him to Hawaii as a bombardier on a B-24. When an air battle destroyed their plane and wounded most of their crew, Louis and the remaining men were transferred. Not long after, they were sent out on a rescue mission in a rickety plane that had been cannibalized for parts. The plane went down over the Pacific. Adrift on a raft with his pilot and the new tail gunner, Louis floated for more than a month until their raft reached Japanese territory, where the living men were taken prisoner. He had already survived impossible odds, but the worst of his ordeal was only just cresting the horizon. (*Amazon.com*)

Until Tuesday: A Wounded Warrior and the Golden Retriever Who Saved Him – by Luis Carlos Montalvan - (252 p.) – 20 copies + 2 Large Print

A highly decorated captain in the U.S. Army, Luis Montalvan never backed down from a challenge during his two tours of duty in Iraq. After returning home from combat, however, his physical wounds and crippling post-traumatic stress disorder began to take their toll. He wondered if he would ever recover. Then Luis met Tuesday, a sensitive golden retriever trained to assist the disabled. Tuesday had lived among prisoners and at a home for troubled boys, and he found it difficult to trust in or connect with a human being--until Luis. *Until Tuesday* is the story of how two wounded warriors, who had given so much and suffered the consequences, found salvation in each other. It is a story about war and peace, injury and recovery, psychological wounds and spiritual restoration. But more than that, it is a story about the love between man and dog, and how, together, they healed each other's souls. (*Amazon.com*)

Wild: From Lost to found on the Pacific Crest Trail – by Cheryl Strayed – (311 p.) – 15 copies

At twenty-two, Cheryl Strayed thought she had lost everything. In the wake of her mother's death, her family scattered and her own marriage was soon destroyed. Four years later, with nothing more to lose, she made the most impulsive decision of her life. With no experience or training, driven only by blind will, she would hike more than a thousand miles of the Pacific Crest Trail from the Mojave Desert through California and Oregon to Washington State — and she would do it alone. Told with suspense and style, sparkling with warmth and humor, *Wild* powerfully captures the terrors and pleasures of one young woman forging ahead against all odds on a journey that maddened, strengthened, and ultimately healed her. (*Goodreads.com*)

Wisdom of the Last Farmer: The Legacy of Generations – by David Mas Masumoto - (256 p.) – 18 copies

Author of Epitaph for a Peach, another title in our collection

David Mas Masumoto works a family farm, growing organic peaches, nectarines, and grapes. When Masumoto's father has a stroke on the fields of their eighty-acre farm, Masumoto confronts life's big questions: What do his and his father's lives mean? What have they lived and worked for? In the harvest of his father's wisdom, and his own, gathered from a lifetime of farming and surviving, Mas finds the natural connections between generation and succession and life, death, and renewal. He tells how to tend and make things grow, and how to know when to let nature take over, weaving together stories of life and death to reveal age-old wisdom. With insights full of beautiful, lyrical descriptions on how to nurture both the tangible and intangible, Masumoto's quiet eloquence reveals how our own destinies are involved in the future of our food, the land, and the farm. (*Amazon.com*)

A Year in Provence -- by Peter Mayle – (207 p.) – 12 copies

An amusing account of an English couple's first year as residents of rural Provence, from the unpleasantness of the winter mistral to the transgressions of summer tourists. Since the old farmhouse they purchased needed repairs, they were immediately beset with problems in dealing with the foibles of local craftspeople and officialdom, not to mention the neighbors--human and animal. Nowhere in France is the consumption of food and drink taken more seriously, and food preparation, dining, and wining anecdotes are prominent in virtually every chapter. A Francophile's delight, this is a highly entertaining book which also teaches a lesson in social life and customs. (*Abbr. from Library Journal*)

NOT JUST FOR KIDS

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland & Through the Looking-Glass -- by Lewis Carroll - (90 p.) – 20 copies

In 1862 Charles Lutwidge Dodgson, a shy Oxford mathematician with a stammer, created a story about a little girl tumbling down a rabbit hole. Thus began the immortal adventures of Alice, perhaps the most popular heroine in English literature. Countless scholars have tried to define the charm of the *Alice* books—with those wonderfully eccentric characters the Queen of Hearts, Tweedledum, and Tweedledee, the Cheshire Cat, Mock Turtle, the Mad Hatter *et al.*—by proclaiming that they really comprise a satire on language, a political allegory, a parody of Victorian children's literature, even a reflection of contemporary ecclesiastical history. Perhaps, as Dodgson might have said, *Alice* is no more than a dream, a fairy tale about the trials and tribulations of growing up—or down, or all turned round—as seen through the expert eyes of a child. (*Amazon.com*)

Bridge to Terabithia – by Katherine Paterson - (208 p.) - 20 copies – Ages 9+

Jess Aarons has been practicing all summer so he can be the fastest runner in the fifth grade. And he almost is, until the new girl in school, Leslie Burke, outpaces him. The two become fast friends and spend most days in the woods behind Leslie's house, where they invent an enchanted land called Terabithia. One morning, Leslie goes to Terabithia without Jess and a tragedy occurs. It will take the love of his family and the strength that Leslie has given him for Jess to be able to deal with his grief. (*Amazon.com*)

Charlotte's Web - by E. B. White - (192 p.) - 20 copies – Ages 9-12

"*Some Pig. Humble. Radiant.*" These are the words in Charlotte's Web, high up in Zuckerman's barn. Charlotte's spiderweb tells of her feelings for a little pig named Wilbur, who simply wants a friend. They also express the love of a girl named Fern, who saved Wilbur's life when he was born the runt of his litter. E. B. White's Newbery Honor Book is a tender novel of friendship, love, life, and death that will continue to be enjoyed by generations to come. (*Amazon*)

Classic Fairy Tales – by Iona Opie and Peter Opie - (344 p.) - 19 copies – Ages 9-12

This volume contains twenty-four of the best known fairy tales in the English language, presented here in the exact words of their first English publication or of the earliest surviving text. Including "Sleeping Beauty," "Bluebeard," "Cinderella," "Thumbelina," and "Hansel and Gretel," as well as many others, this collection provides a historical introduction for each tale and a general Introduction which traces the history of fairy tales collected in Asia and Europe long before they appeared in English. (*Amazon.com*)

Daniel Half Human: and the Good Nazi - by David Chotjewitz (304 p.) – 17 copies – Grade 7+

In 1933, best friends Daniel and Armin admire Hitler, but as anti-Semitism buoys Hitler to power, Daniel learns he is half Jewish, threatening the friendship even as life in their beloved Hamburg, Germany, is becoming nightmarish. Interspersed chapters detail Daniel and Armin's reunion in 1945. (*Amazon.com*)

Dragonwings – by Laurence Yep - (336 p.) - 16 copies – Grade 4-7

Moon Shadow is eight years old when he sails from China to join his father, Windrider, in America. Windrider lives in San Francisco and makes his living doing laundry. Father and son have never met. But Moon Shadow grows to love and respect his father and to believe in his wonderful dream. And Windrider, with Moon Shadow's help, is willing to endure the mockery of the other Chinese, the poverty, the separation from his wife and country, even the great earthquake, to make his dream come true. Inspired by the account of a Chinese immigrant who made a flying machine in 1909, Laurence Yep's historical novel beautifully portrays the rich traditions of the Chinese community as it made its way in a hostile new world. (*Amazon.com*)

Elsewhere – by Gabrielle Zevin - (304 p.) – 20 copies – Grade 7-10

Welcome to Elsewhere. It is warm, with a breeze, and the beaches are marvelous. It's quiet and peaceful. You can't get sick or any older. Elsewhere is where fifteen-year-old Liz Hall ends up, after she has died. It is a place so like Earth, yet completely different. Here Liz will age backward from the day of her death until she becomes a baby again and returns to Earth. But Liz wants to turn sixteen, not fourteen again. She wants to get her driver's license. She wants to graduate from high school and go to college. And now that she's dead, Liz is being forced to live a life she doesn't want with a grandmother she has only just met. And it is not going well. How can Liz let go of the only life she has ever known and embrace a new one? Is it possible that a life lived in reverse is no different from a life lived forward? This moving, often funny book about grief, death, and loss will stay with the reader long after the last page is turned. (*Amazon.com*)

The Giver – by Lois Lowry - (192 p.) - 13 copies – Ages 12-14

The Giver, the 1994 Newbery Medal winner, has become one of the most influential novels of our time. The haunting story centers on twelve-year-old Jonas, who lives in a seemingly ideal, if colorless, world of conformity and contentment. Not until he is given his life assignment as the Receiver of Memory does he begin to understand the dark, complex secrets behind his fragile community. (*Amazon.com*)

The Golden Compass – by Phillip Pullman - (399 p.) - 17 copies + audio (CD) – Ages 12+

Lyra is rushing to the cold, far North, where witch clans and armored bears rule. North: where the Gobblers take the children they steal -- including her friend, Roger. North: where her fearsome uncle Asriel is trying to build a bridge to a parallel world. Can one small girl make a difference in such great and terrible endeavors? This is *Lyra*: a savage, a schemer, a liar, and as fierce and true a champion as Roger or Asriel could want. But what Lyra doesn't know is that to help one of them will be to betray the other... (*Amazon.com*)

Life As We Knew It – by Susan Beth Pfeffer - (360 p.) – 17 copies – Grade 6+

High school sophomore Miranda's disbelief turns to fear in a split second when an asteroid knocks the moon closer to Earth, like "one marble hits another." The result is catastrophic. How can her family prepare for the future when worldwide tsunamis are wiping out the coasts, earthquakes are rocking the continents, and volcanic ash is blocking out the sun? Miranda, her two brothers, and their mother retreat to the safe haven of their sunroom, subsisting on stockpiled food and limited water. Told in a year's worth of journal entries, this heart-pounding story chronicles Miranda's struggle to hold on to the most important resource of all—hope—in an increasingly desperate and unfamiliar world. (*Amazon.com*)

Little Women – by Louisa May Alcott - (464 p.) – 12 copies – Ages 9-12

Little Women is the heartwarming story of the March family that has thrilled generations of readers. It is the story of four sisters--Jo, Meg, Amy and Beth-- and of the courage, humor and ingenuity they display to survive poverty and the absence of their father during the Civil War. (*Goodreads.com*)

Private Peaceful – by Michael Morpurgo - (224 p.) – 20 copies – Grade 7+

A stunning novel of the First World War, a boy who is on its front lines, and a childhood remembered. As the enemy lurks in the darkness, Thomas struggles to stay awake through the night. He has lived through the terror of gas attacks and watched friends die by his side. But in the morning, Thomas will be forced to confront an even greater horror. As the minutes tick by, Thomas remembers his childhood spent deep in the countryside with his mother, his brothers, and Molly, the love of his life. But each minute that passes brings Thomas closer to something he can't bear to think about -- the moment when the war and its horrific consequences will change his life forever. (*Amazon.com*)

Secret Garden – by Frances Hodgson Burnett - (288 p.) – 18 copies – Ages 9-12

"When Mary Lennox was sent to Misselthwaite Manor to live with her uncle, everybody said she was the most disagreeable-looking child ever seen..." So begins the famous opening of one of the world's best-loved children's stories. First published in 1911, this is the poignant tale of a lonely little girl, orphaned and sent to a Yorkshire mansion at the edge of a vast lonely moor. At first, she is frightened by this gloomy place, but with the help of the local boy Dickon, who earns the trust of the moor's wild animals with his honesty and love, the invalid Colin, a spoiled, unhappy boy terrified of life, and a mysterious, abandoned garden, Mary is eventually overcome by the mystery of life itself—its birth and renewal, its love and joy. (*Amazon.com*)

Sold – by Patricia McCormick - (272 p.) – 17 copies – Grade 9+

Lakshmi is a thirteen-year-old girl who lives with her family in a small hut on a mountain in Nepal. Though she is desperately poor, her life is full of simple pleasures. But when the harsh Himalayan monsoons strike, Lakshmi's stepfather says she must help support her family. He introduces her to a glamorous stranger who tells her she will find her a job as a maid in the city and so Lakshmi journeys to India and arrives at "Happiness House" full of hope. But she soon learns the unthinkable truth: she has been sold into prostitution. The brothel is ruled with cruelty and cunning, and Lakshmi is trapped there until she can pay off her family's debt, but is cheated of her meager earnings so that she can never leave. Lakshmi's life becomes a nightmare from which she cannot escape. Still, she lives by her mother's words — Simply to endure is to triumph — and when the day comes when she must make a decision—will she risk everything for a chance to reclaim her life? (*Amazon.com*)

Vampire High – by Douglas Rees - (240 p.) – 20 copies – Grade 6-9

It doesn't take long for Cody Elliot to realize that his new high school is a little different. The other students are supernaturally strong, don't like the sunlight, and are always placing orders at the local blood bank. When his new friend shows him his fangs, Cody doesn't need any more clues—these kids are vampires! As Cody struggles to fit into this secretive community, he disrupts centuries of human-vampire segregation, with some serious—and some seriously funny—consequences. (*Amazon.com*)

BOOK CLUB RESOURCES

The Book Club Cookbook – by Judy Gelman and Vicki Levy Krupp - (510 p.) - 2 copies

Featuring recipes and discussion ideas for 100 popular book club selections, *The Book Club Cookbook* will guide you in selecting and preparing culinary masterpieces that blend perfectly with the literary masterpieces your club is reading, with contributions from many of the authors themselves. Includes such scrumptious pairings as Tandoori Shrimp with *Life of Pi* by Yann Martel and Spicy Pork with Orange Hoisin Sauce in Wonton Cups with *Balzac and the Little Chinese Seamstress* by Dai Sijie. (*Amazon.com*)

Book Lust – by Nancy Pearl - (288 p.) - 10 copies

Pearl, a longtime reader, book reviewer, and public librarian, presents a hundred or so of her favorites in this novel guide to finding the right book for the right mood. Presented in eclectic categories of people, places and themes (e.g. "Prose by Poets," "Dinosaur Hunting," "In Big Sky Country" and "Academia: The Joke"), each of her suggestions is accompanied by a few of her thoughts on it, a succinct plot summary and often information about the volume's prizes and print status. (Publishers Weekly, 2003)

More Book Lust – by Nancy Pearl - (288 p.) - 10 copies

In this sequel, Pearl dips further into her repertoire of have-read books (both fiction and nonfiction), this time presenting a whole new set of categories. From "Adapting to Adoption" to "Your Tax Dollars at Work: Good Reading from the Government (Really!)," and including "Nagging Mothers, Crying Children," "Science 101," and "Gender-Bending," Pearl suggests titles relevant to each category and gives a brief annotation for each. (Booklist, © American Library Association)