

49-99 Book Club in a Box
Titles Available – As of November 2025
(Please destroy all previous lists)

FICTION, CONTEMPORARY AND HISTORICAL

After You – by JoJo Moyes – (352 p.) – 15 copies

Moyes' sequel to her bestselling *Me Before You* (2012) – which was about Louisa, a young caregiver who falls in love with her quadriplegic charge, Will, and then loses him when he chooses suicide over a life of constant pain – examines the effects of a loved one's death on those left behind to mourn. It's been 18 months since Will's death, and Louisa is still grieving. After falling off her apartment roof terrace in a drunken state, she momentarily fears she'll end up paralyzed herself, but Sam, the paramedic who treats her, does a great job – and she's lucky. Louisa convalesces in the bosom of her family in the village of Stortford. When Louisa returns to London, a troubled 16-year-old named Lily turns up on her doorstep saying Will was her father though he never knew it because her mother thought he was "a selfish arsehole" and never told him she was pregnant. (Abbreviated from *Kirkus Reviews*)

The Alchemist – by Paulo Coelho – (186 p.) – 15 copies + Large Print

"The boy's name was Santiago," it begins; Santiago is well educated and had intended to be a priest. But a desire for travel, to see every part of his native Spain, prompted him to become a shepherd instead. He's contented. But then twice he dreams about hidden treasure, and a seer tells him to follow the dream's instructions: go to Egypt to the pyramids, where he will find a treasure. After that, a wise man informs Santiago that "to realize one's destiny is a person's only real obligation," and that life is full of omens one must read and follow. Santiago parts with his flock and sets off for Tangier en route to Egypt. In Tangier Santiago flourishes, and much time passes. But at last, he joins a caravan heading eastward and meets a famous alchemist, who further points Santiago in the direction of his treasure. Santiago makes it to the pyramids and there learns where his fortune is to be found. Beneath this novel's compelling story and the shimmering elegance with which it's told, lies a bedrock of wisdom about following one's heart. (Abbreviated from *Kirkus Reviews* review by *Brad Hooper*)

The Alice Network – by Kate Quinn – (494 pages) – 15 copies + Large Print

Historical fiction that follows two women as they track a French Nazi sympathizer from post-World War II London. One was a British spy in WWI, the other the American cousin of a French spy in WWII. Compelling, fascinating history with a quiet romantic arc and a tribute to the power of connection and friendship. (*Kirkus Reviews*)

All the King's Men – by Robert Penn Warren – (661 p.) – 15 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*)

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

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. (Abbreviated from *Booklist* review by *Brad Hooper*)

All the Single Ladies – by Dorothea Benton Frank – (352 p.) – 13 copies

In this fast-paced and evocative novel, Dorothea Benton Frank again takes us deep into the Lowcountry of South Carolina, where three unsuspecting women are brought together by tragedy and mystery. As these three women's lives inevitably connect, they share their concerns about men, getting older, and the horrors of maintaining financial stability. Somehow their conversations always return to the enigma of Kathy. Who was she? What did her short life mean? As Lisa, Carrie, and Suzanne power walk the beaches of the Isle of Palms, they gradually uncover the truth of Kathy's life and unfurl plans to secure their own futures, as fate steps in to help them discover that being single doesn't have to mean being alone. (Abbreviated from *HarperCollins Publishers*)

All the Stars in the Heavens – by Adriana Trigiani – (447 pages) – 13 copies + Large Print

A novice nun suddenly finds herself dismissed from her convent and swept up into the heady world of Hollywood's golden age. A heartwarming tale of women's lives behind the movies. (Abbreviated from *Kirkus Reviews*)

Animal Farm – by George Orwell – (141 pages) – 15 copies

A modern-day fable, with modern implications in a deceiving simplicity, by [Orwell] whose critical brilliance is well adapted to this type of satire. This tells of the revolt on a farm, against humans, when the pigs take over the intellectual superiority, training the horses, cows, sheep, etc., into acknowledging their greatness. The first hints come with the reading out of a pig who instigated the building of a windmill, so that the electric power would be theirs, the idea taken over by Napoleon who becomes topman with no maybes about it. Napoleon trains the young puppies to be his guards, dickers with humans, gradually instigates a reign of terror, and breaks the final commandment against any animal walking on two legs. The old faithful followers find themselves no better off for food and work than they were when man ruled them, learn their final disgrace when they see Napoleon and Squealer carousing with their enemies... A basic statement of the evils of dictatorship in that it not only corrupts the leaders but deadens the intelligence and awareness of those led so that tyranny is inevitable. Mr. Orwell's animals exist, with a narrative as individual as it is apt in political parody. (*Kirkus Reviews*)

Arctic Drift – by Clive Cussler – (593 pages) – 14 copies

A potential breakthrough discovery to reverse global warming... a series of unexplained sudden deaths in British Columbia... a rash of international incidents between the United States and one of its closest allies that threatens to erupt into an actual shooting war... NUMA director Dirk Pitt and his children, Dirk Jr. and Summer, have reason to believe there's a connection here somewhere, but they also know they have very little time to find it before events escalate out of control. Their only real clue might just be a mysterious silvery mineral traced to a long-ago expedition in search of the fabled Northwest Passage. But no one survived from that doomed mission, captain and crew perished to a man. (*Goodreads*)

The Art Forger – by B. A. Shapiro – (360 p.) – 15 copies

Broke and painting copies of famous artists' work for a reproduction site, artist Claire Roth is enticed by gallery owner Aidan Markel's request to forge a painting by Degas that was stolen from the Isabella Gardner Museum in 1990 (in the largest unsolved art heist in history). As Claire works, she wonders if the painting she's forging is legitimate. Meanwhile, Claire steps in when her blocked artist lover can't finish his work for a deadline, essentially painting what becomes something of an art world sensation. Her lover slips into denial about her contribution and Claire weighs the repercussions of going public, knowing that it will damage her reputation even more badly than her heart. (Abbreviated from *Publishers Weekly*)

The Art of Hearing Heartbeats – by Jan-Philipp Sendker – (325 p.) – 14 copies

A lush tale of romance and family set in mid-twentieth-century Burma. Four years after her father mysteriously disappeared, Julia Win traces him to the small town of Kalaw after finding a love letter among his possessions addressed to a woman named Mi Mi. In Kalaw, an old man named U Ba approaches her, promising to tell her the story of her father's life before he came to New York and met her mother. As a child, Tin Win was abandoned by his mother, who was told by an astrologer the boy was cursed. At 10, Tin Win gradually goes blind. He's taken in by a kindly neighbor, who finds him a home at a local monastery. It is there that he meets Mi Mi, whose crippled legs make her as much of an outsider as Tin Win. Their natural camaraderie quickly turns into love, but their happiness is brief. (Abbreviated from *Booklist* review by Kristine Huntley)

The Art of Racing in the Rain – by Garth Stein – (321 p.) – 15 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*)

The Arsonists' City—by Hala Alyan— (443 p.) 12 copies

"A sweeping family saga that examines the insidious long shadow of war...Alyan brings her talents to examine the ongoing crisis of Palestinian displacement in *The Arsonist's City* through deeply imagined characters, place-based descriptions that teem with life, and attention to conflicts from past to present day." — Jacqueline Alnes, *Electric Literature*

The Atomic City Girls – by Janet Beard – (353 p.) – 12 copies

June Walker is just 18 when she moves to Oak Ridge, a town situated within a restricted military area, to work at her first job. Along with many other young women, she's instructed to watch the meters and adjust the dials in front of her – she gets no other information about what she is doing. Surrounded by signs with slogans like "What you do here, what you see here, what you hear here, let it stay here," the women are ordered to avoid telling their friends and family anything about Oak Ridge. But not everyone at Oak Ridge is in the dark about the weapon they're building; Sam Cantor, a Jewish scientist, knows that the workers of Oak Ridge are rushing to create an atomic bomb that will hopefully end the war. When he and June begin a romance and he tells June what she's working on, she must deal with the knowledge that she's creating a devastating weapon. (Abbreviated from *Kirkus Reviews*)

The Aviator's Wife – by Melanie Benjamin – (396 p.) – 15 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. (Abbreviated from *Booklist* review by *Margaret Flanagan*)

Band of Sisters —by Laura Willig — (506 p.) — 13 copies + Large Print

Band of Sisters is an absorbing, stirring tale set in German-Occupied France during WWI that follows seventeen young American women from Smith College as they embark on a mission that doesn't quite go as smoothly as planned, to befriend and use their own unique skill sets to provide relief, food, medical care, and education to the villagers whose lives have been decimated by war. Based on a true story. (www.whatsbetterthanbooks.com)

Beartown – by Frederik Backman – (415 pages) – 15 copies + audio (CD) + Large Print

"Backman is a masterful writer, his characters familiar yet distinct, flawed yet heroic. . . There are scenes that bring tears, scenes of gut-wrenching despair, and moments of sly humor. . . Like *Friday Night Lights*, this is about more than youth sports; it's part coming-of-age novel, part study of moral failure, and finally a chronicle of groupthink in which an unlikely hero steps forward to save more than one person from self-destruction. A thoroughly empathetic examination of the fragile human spirit, Backman's latest will resonate a long time." (Abbreviated from *Kirkus Reviews*)

Beautiful Ruins – by Jess Walter – (309 p.) – 15 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*)

Before We Were Yours – by Lisa Wingate – (334 p.) 12 copies + Large Print

Based on one of America's most notorious real-life scandals – in which Georgia Tann, director of a Memphis-based adoption organization, kidnapped and sold poor children to wealthy families all over the country – Lisa Wingate's riveting, wrenching, and ultimately uplifting tale reminds us how, even though the paths we take can lead to many places, the heart never forgets where we belong. (*bookishelf.com*)

Beloved – by Toni Morrison – (275 pages) – 15 copies

Set in rural Ohio several years after the Civil War, this haunting chronicle of slavery and its aftermath traces the life of a young woman, Sethe, who has kept a terrible memory at bay only by shutting down part of her mind. The narrative concerns Sethe's former life as a slave on Sweet Home Farm, her escape with her children to what seems a haven and the tragic events that ensue. (Abbreviated from *Publishers Weekly*)

Beneath a Scarlet Sky – by Mark T. Sullivan – (509 p.) – 15 copies + Large Print + audio CD

In 1943, 17-year-old Pino Lella strolls along the streets of Milan, Italy. Outside a bakery, he meets the beautiful Anna. He pesters her for a date, and she accepts. Despite being stood up, Pino cannot get Anna out of his mind. When an Allied bomb wrecks his family home, Pino's parents send him north to Casa Alpina. There he assists Father Re in his dangerous missions of transporting Jews to safety in neutral Switzerland. Near Pino's eighteenth birthday, he's recalled to Milan, his father suggesting enlistment in the German Army to avoid being drafted. Pino becomes the chauffeur/translator for General Leyers, Hitler's left-hand-man in Italy. Surprisingly, he meets Anna again, working as a maid to Leyers' mistress. Pino uses the opportunities of his position not only to spy for the partisans but also to romance Anna. Pino expects to fulfill his dream of spending a lifetime of happiness with her. (historicalnovelsociety.org)

The Berry Pickers—by Amanda Peters—(320 p.)—12 copies + Large Print

"The strength of Amanda Peters's novel lies in its understanding of how trauma spreads through a life and a family, and its depiction of the challenges facing Indigenous people . . . [A] powerful message about truth, forgiveness and healing." —Marion Winik, *The Washington Post*

Between Earth and Sky—by Amanda Skenandore— (316 p.)—13 copies +Large Print

"Sweeping, epic, heart-wrenching, and powerful, Skenandore's debut plunges readers into the world of the mission schools in the American west. Skenandore has drawn on family history to create a realistic and gripping account of a forbidden friendship. This thought-provoking novel illuminates the plight of Native American children and the planned destruction of a culture and a people. It's a well-written, carefully researched, compelling novel for anyone fascinated by this hidden piece of our history." – RT Book Reviews

Big Little Lies – by Liane Moriarty – (486 pages) – 15 copies

Darkly comic mystery surrounding a disastrous parents' night at an elementary school fundraiser.... [after which] the truth remains tantalizingly difficult to sort out. Deservedly popular Moriarty invigorates the tired social-issue formula of women's fiction through wit, good humor, sharp insight into human nature and addictive storytelling. (*Kirkus Reviews*)

The Birth of Venus – by Sarah Dunnant – (391 pages) – 15 copies

In this arresting tale of art, love and betrayal in 15th-century Florence, the daughter of a wealthy cloth merchant seeks the freedom of marriage in order to paint but finds that she may have bought her liberty at the cost of love and true fulfillment. Alessandra, 16, is tall, sharp-tongued and dauntingly clever. At first

reluctant to agree to an arranged marriage, she changes her mind when she meets elegant 48-year-old Cristoforo, who is well-versed in art and literature. He promises to give her all the freedom she wants-and she finds out why on her wedding night. Her disappointment and frustration are soon overshadowed by the growing cloud of madness and violence hanging over Florence, nourished by the sermons of the fanatically pious Savonarola. As the wealthy purge their palazzos of "low" art and luxuries, Alessandra gives in to the dangerous attraction that draws her to a tormented young artist commissioned to paint her family's chapel. (Abbreviated from *Publishers Weekly*)

Black Buck—by Mateo Askaripour— (381 p.)—12 copies + Large Print

"Mateo Askaripour begins his debut, which follows Brooklyn-dwelling Darren as he's plucked from his Starbucks manager job by a start-up CEO and crashed into a sales job as the only Black member of the company, with an author's note that the book might be used as a reference by aspiring Black salesmen. It's a satirical construct that informs this razor-sharp send-up of ladder-climbing office culture, and all the systemic and individual racism it perpetuates." — Vanity Fair

Blessings – by Anna Quindlin – (226 pages) – 15 copies

A well-told story of love and redemption, one that is not based on the passion of a man for a woman but on the affection and understanding that develops between people of very different backgrounds who are brought together by a baby named Faith and a house called Blessings. (*Washington Post Book World*)

Blue Heaven – by C.J. Box – (384 p.) – 15 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*)

The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek – by Kim Michele Richardson – (286 p.) –13 Copies + Large Print

Based on true stories from different times (the blue-skinned people of Kentucky and the WPA's Pack Horse Librarians), this novel packs a lot of hot topics into one narrative. Perfect for book clubs. (Abbreviated from *Library Journal* review by *Julie Kane*)

Britt-Marie Was Here – by Fredrik Backman – (325 p.) – 13 copies + audio (CD)

"The bestselling author of *A Man Called Ove* returns with this heartwarming story about a woman rediscovering herself after personal crisis. Backman reveals Britt-Marie's need for order with clear, tight descriptions. Insightful and touching, this is a sweet and inspiring story about truth and transformation. Fans of Backman's will find another winner in these pages." (*Publishers Weekly*)

The Burgess Boys – by Elizabeth Strout – (320 p.) – 12 copies

As in her Pulitzer Prize-winning *Olive Kitteredge*, Strout promises to make every day small-town life luminous and absorbing. Brothers who have fled upstate Shirley Falls for New York City return when their sister needs help with her troubled teenage son. (*Library Journal*)

Caleb's Crossing – by Geraldine Brooks – (318 p.) – 14 Copies + audio (CD)

Bethia Mayfield learns everything by eavesdropping – Latin, history, the Wampanoag language. From her mother and a local midwife, she learns how to use herbs to heal. On one of her rides around the island on her horse, she meets a young Wampanoag boy named Caleb. Caleb teaches her about his world; he shares practical information about the island's best clam flats and berry patches. With Bethia's parents and her oafish, overprotective brother, Makepeace, unaware of the friendship, the two grow up side by side, their bond always stronger than any flirtation. Bethia forms her own religion – a braiding of beliefs that is continually tested, reflected upon and improved. Then come deaths that place Bethia's family's

future in jeopardy. Bethia's grandfather indentures her to a schoolmaster in Cambridge in return for [her brother] Makepeace's tuition. The only solace she has is that Caleb and his friend, another Wampanoag named Joel – able students taught by Bethia's father – will also go. True to the times, her only hope of a dignified life depends upon marriage, but Bethia holds firm through several possibilities. (Abbreviated from *L.A. Times* review by *Salter Reynolds*)

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*)

The Call of the Wild – by Jack London – (139 p.) – 17 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*)

Circling the Sun – by Paula McLain – (355 pages) –15 copies + LP + audio CD

Circling the Sun focuses on Markham's life through her 20s; she tells her story from the cockpit of her Vega Gull airplane during her record-breaking 1936 flight. Below is the "black chop and nothingness" of the Atlantic, with "the propeller ... slicing through years, turning me backward and also endlessly forward, setting me free." Paula McLain has created a voice that is lush and intricate to evoke a character who is enviably brave and independent. Markham's self-stated challenge is overcoming the "horrible crimes [of] being a woman and daring to think I could be free." Soaring high over the Atlantic at the age of 28, she finally embraces the freedom she seeks when she learns to defy gravity. (Abbreviated from *npr.org* review by *Jean Zimmerman*)

Clock Dance – by Anne Tyler – (292 p.) – 12 copies + Large Print

Brilliant, charming, and book-club-ready.... Tyler's bedazzling yet fathoms-deep feel-good novel is wrought with nimble humor, intricate understanding of emotions and family, place and community—and bounteous pleasure in quirkiness, discovery, and renewal. (*Booklist*)

Code Name Verity – by Elizabeth Wein – (332 pages) – 13 copies + Large Print

"Code Name Verity," by Elizabeth Wein, is a fiendishly plotted mind game of a novel, the kind you have to read twice. The first time you just devour the story of girl-pilot-and-girl-spy friendship and the thrill of flying a plane and the horrors of Nazi torture and the bravery of French Resistance fighters and you force yourself to slow down, but you don't want to, because you're terrified these beautiful, vibrant characters are doomed. The second time, you read more slowly, proving to yourself that yes, the clues were there all along for you to solve the giant puzzle you weren't even aware was constructed around you, and it takes focus and attention to catch all the little references to the fact that nothing is what you thought. (Abbreviated from *New York Times* review by *Marjorie Ingall*)

Consider This, Señora – by Harriet Doerr – (241 p.) – 15 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*)

The Covenant of Water – by Abraham Verghese - (768 p.) - 12 copies + Large Print

“A rich, heartfelt novel . . . A lavish smorgasbord of genealogy, medicine and love affairs, tracing a family’s evolution from 1900 through the 1970s, in pointillist detail . . . What binds and drives this vast, intricate history as it patiently unspools are vibrant characters, sensuous detail and an intimate tour of cultures, landscapes and mores across eras . . . Verghese’s technical strengths are consistent and versatile: crisp, taut pacing, sensuous descriptions that can fan out into rhapsody . . . Verghese’s compassion for his ensemble, which subtly multiplies, infuses every page. So does his ability to inhabit a carousel of sensibilities—including those of myriad women—with penetrating insight and empathy . . . Rich and reverberant. The further into the novel readers sink, the more power it accrues . . . Grandly ambitious, impassioned . . . A magnificent feat.” (*Washington Post* review by Joan Frank)

Crown of Dust – by Mary Volmer – (274 p.) – 15copies

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, can 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*)

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.) – 21 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*)

Daughter of Fortune – by Isabel Allende – (416 p.) – 15 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*)

Devil in a Blue Dress – by Walter Mosley – (263 p.) – 15 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 walk in, offering good money if Easy will simply locate Miss Daphne Monet, a blonde beauty known to frequent black jazz clubs. (*Amazon*)

The Diamond Eye – by Kate Quinn – (418 p.) – 12 copies + Audio CD + Large Print

The Diamond Eye is a remarkable combination of immersive wartime storytelling, rich detailing and wonderful pacing. What really makes *The Diamond Eye* land, though, goes beyond Quinn's mastery of her chosen genre. This is, first and foremost, an exceptional character piece, a study of a woman who is a killer, a mother, a lover and, above all else, a survivor." (*BookPage*)

The Disappeared –by C. J. Box – (388 p.) – 12 copies + Large Print

Wyoming game warden Joe Pickett has two lethal cases to contend with in this electrifying #1 New York Times-bestseller from C. J. Box. Wyoming's new governor isn't sure what to make of Joe Pickett, but he has a job for him that is extremely delicate. A prominent female British executive never came home from the high-end guest ranch she was visiting, and the British Embassy is pressing hard. Pickett knows that happens sometimes – these ranches are stocked with handsome young cowboys, and ranch romances aren't uncommon. But no sign of her months after she vanished? That suggests something else. The answers, when they come, will be even worse than he'd imagined. (*Book Companion*)

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 notices 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*)

Dreaming in Cuban – by Cristina Garcia – (245 p.) – 15 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*)

The Elegance of the Hedgehog – by Muriel Barbery – (325 p.) – 15 copies + audio (CD) + Large Print

Renée Michel, 54 and widowed, is the stolid concierge in an elegant Paris hôtel particulier. Though "short, ugly, and plump," Renée has, as she says, "always been poor," but she has a secret: she's a ferocious autodidact who's better versed in literature and the arts than any of the building's snobby residents. Meanwhile, "supersmart" 12-year-old Paloma Josse, who switches off narration with Renée, lives in the building with her wealthy, liberal family. Having grasped life's futility early on, Paloma plans to commit suicide on her 13th birthday. The arrival of a new tenant, Kakuro Ozu, who befriends both the young pessimist and the concierge alike, sets up their possible transformations. By turns very funny (particularly in Paloma's sections) and heartbreaking, Barbery never allows either of her dour narrators to get too cerebral or too sentimental. Her simple plot and sudden denouement add up to a great deal more than the sum of their parts. (Abbreviated from *Publishers Weekly*)

English Creek – by Ivan Doig – (352 p.) – 15 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*)

Euphoria – by Lily King – (257 pages) – 15 copies

Euphoria is Lily King's nationally bestselling breakout novel of three young, gifted anthropologists of the '30s caught in a passionate love triangle that threatens their bonds, their careers, and, ultimately, their lives. Inspired by events in the life of revolutionary anthropologist Margaret Mead, Euphoria is "dazzling ... suspenseful ... brilliant...an exhilarating novel." (Abbreviated from *Boston Globe*)

Everything I Never Told You – by Celeste Ng – (292 p.) – 13 copies

The cracks in Lydia's perfect-daughter foundation grow slowly but erupt suddenly and tragically, and her death threatens to destroy her parents and deeply scar her siblings. Tantalizingly thrilling, Ng's emotionally complex debut novel captures the tension between cultures and generations with the deft touch of a seasoned writer. (*Booklist* review by *Carol Haggas*)

Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close – by Jonathan Safran Foer – (326 p.) – 15 copies

Oskar Schell is a nine-year-old amateur inventor, jewelry designer, astrophysicist, tambourine player and pacifist. Oskar turns his naïvely precocious vocabulary to the understanding of historical tragedy, as he searches New York for the lock that matches a mysterious key left by his father when he was killed in the September 11 attacks, a quest that intertwines with the story of his grandparents, whose lives were blighted by the firebombing of Dresden. Unafraid to show his traumatized characters' constant groping for emotional catharsis, Foer demonstrates once again that he is one of the few contemporary writers willing to risk sentimentalism to address great questions of truth, love and beauty. (Abbreviated from *Publishers Weekly*)

A Fabricated Mexican – by Rick Rivera – (168 p.) – 15 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*)

Fahrenheit 451 – by Ray Bradbury – (212 p.) – 15 copies + audio (CD)

In *Fahrenheit 451*, Ray Bradbury's classic, frightening vision of the future, firemen don't put out fires – they start them to burn books. Guy Montag is a book-burning fireman undergoing a crisis of faith. His wife spends all day with her television "family," imploring Montag to work harder so that they can afford a fourth TV wall. Their dull, empty life sharply contrasts with that of his next-door neighbor Clarisse, a young girl thrilled by the ideas in books, and more interested in what she can see in the world around her than in the mindless chatter of the tube. When Clarisse disappears mysteriously, Montag is moved to make some changes and starts hiding books in his home. Eventually, his wife turns him in, and he must answer the call to burn his secret cache of books. After fleeing to avoid arrest, Montag winds up joining an outlaw band of scholars who keep the contents of books in their heads, waiting for the time society will once again need the wisdom of literature. (Abbreviated from *Amazon*)

A Fall of Marigolds – by Susan Meissner – (370 pages) – 14 copies

Taryn Michaels specializes in hard-to-find patterns at an Upper West Side fabric shop. She is haunted by her failure to find a match for a scarf covered in bright marigolds, the same scarf she was holding when the Twin Towers fell in 2001, killing her husband. Unbeknownst to Taryn, the scarf began its life in New York on Ellis Island in 1911, when a very recently widowed Welshman carried it into the scarlet-fever ward of Nurse Clara Wood. Clara, like Taryn, is hiding out in her work, having witnessed the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire, watching the man she loved jump from an upper floor. When Clara discovers the terrible secret of the scarf's original owner, Lily, she must decide if she can accept the help of a handsome doctor and brave the ferry to Manhattan to find answers. (Abbreviated from *Booklist* review by *Susan Maguire*)

The Family Chao – by Lan Samantha Chang – (320 p.) – 12 copies

Chang's well-turned third novel neatly balances two substantial themes. One is the blast radius of family dysfunction; the second is the way anti-immigrant attitudes warp the truth and place additional pressure on an overstressed family. The story culminates in a trial that becomes a stage for broader debates over obligation, morality, and family. But Chang is excellent at exploring this at a more intimate level as well. A later plot twist deepens the tension and concludes a story that smartly offers only gray areas in response to society's demands for simplicity and assurance. (Abbreviated from *Kirkus Reviews*)

First Frost – by Sarah Addison Allen – (291 p.) – 12 copies

Allen takes the reader on a journey to the small town of Bascom, N.C., where the Waverley women are known for their unusual gifts. When a strange, elderly man comes to town and threatens to disrupt the peaceful Waverley existence, the family must pull together and rely on each woman's unique talents. (Abbreviated from *Publishers Weekly*)

Frankenstein – by Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley – (191 p.) – 20 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*)

The French War Bride – by Robin Wells – 464 p.) – 12 copies

Through a backdrop of World War II Paris, you follow the life and tragedies of Amelie and her family and friends as they fight to survive during the Nazi occupation. As Amelie relates this story on her terms, to Kat, her dying husband's ex –fiancée, you hear why she was forced to make the choices that would ultimately change so many lives.

A Gentleman In Moscow – by Amor Towles – (462 p.) – 12 copies + Large Print

Sentenced to house arrest in **Moscow's** Metropol Hotel by a Bolshevik tribunal for writing a poem deemed to encourage revolt, Count Alexander Rostov nonetheless lives the fullest of lives, discovering the depths of his humanity. Inside the elegant Metropol, located near the Kremlin and the Bolshoi, the Count slowly adjusts. (*Kirkus Reviews*)

The German Girl – by Armando Lucas Correa – (332 pages) – 15 copies

Correa bases his debut novel on the real-life account of the ill-fated 1939 voyage of the St. Louis, delivering an engrossing and heartbreaking Holocaust story; his listing of the passengers' names at the end of the book adds to its power. (*Library Journal* review by *Catherine Coyne*)

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 marries him, Li Lan's involvement with the Lim family becomes even murkier and potentially dangerous. (Abbreviated from *Booklist*)

Ghost of Hannah Mendes – by Naomi Ragen – (384 p.) – 15 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*)

Gilead – by Marilynne Robinson – (247 p.) – 13 copies

A reverend in tiny *Gilead*, Iowa, John Ames is 74, and his life is at its best – and at its end. Half a century ago, Ames's first wife died in childbirth, followed by her new baby daughter, and Ames, seemingly destined to live alone, devoted himself to his town, church, and people – until the Pentecost Sunday when a young stranger named Lila walked into the church out of the rain and, from in back, listened to Ames's sermon, then returned each Sunday after. The two married – Ames was 67 – had a son, and life began all over again. But not for long. In the novel's present (mid-1950s), Ames is suffering from the heart trouble that will soon bring his death. And so he embarks upon the writing of a long diary, or daily letter – the pages of *Gilead* – addressed to his seven-year-old son so he can read it when he's grown and know not only about his absent father but his own history, family, and heritage. And what a letter it is! Not only is John Ames the most kind, observant, sensitive, and companionable of men to spend time with, but his story reaches back to his patriarchal Civil War great-grandfather, fiery preacher and abolitionist; comes up to his grandfather, also a reverend and in the War; to his father; and to his own life, spent in his father's church. This long story of daily life in deep Middle America – addressed to an unknown and doubting future – is never in the slightest way parochial or small, but instead it evokes on the pulse the richest imaginable identifying truths of what America was. Robinson has composed, with its cascading perfections of symbols, a novel as big as a nation, as quiet as thought, and moving as prayer. Matchless and towering. (Abbreviated from *Kirkus Reviews*)

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

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*)

The Goldfinch – by Donna Tartt – (771 p.) – 12 copies

"A long-awaited, elegant meditation on love, memory, and the haunting power of art....Eloquent and assured, with memorable characters.... A standout-and well-worth the wait." (*Kirkus Reviews*)

The Good Earth – by Pearl S. Buck – (357 p.) – 12 copies

The novel follows the life of Wang Lung, a poor farmer in Anhui province who gradually, through both hard work and unexpected fortune, acquires more land and money than he had ever dreamed of owning. Though Wang Lung gets temporarily caught up in the trappings of wealth (taking on a concubine and dressing himself in lavish silk robes), he eventually grows to re-appreciate the simple life of a hard-working farmer. (*asiasociety.org*)

The Great Alone – by Kristin Hannah – (438 p.) – 15 copies + Large Print

In this unforgettable portrait of human frailty and resilience, Kristin Hannah reveals the indomitable character of the modern American pioneer and the spirit of a vanishing Alaska—a place of incomparable beauty and danger. *The Great Alone* is a daring, beautiful, stay-up-all-night story about love and loss, the fight for survival, and the wildness that lives in both man and nature. (*Amazon*)

Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society – by Mary Ann Shaffer – (304 p.) – 15 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*)

The Handmaid's Tale – by Margaret Atwood – (320 p.) – 15 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 Heaven and Earth Grocery Story—by James McBride—(416 p.)—15 copies + Large Print

“With this story, McBride brilliantly captures a rapidly changing country, as seen through the eyes of the recently arrived and the formerly enslaved . . . And through this evocation, McBride offers us a thorough reminder: Against seemingly impossible odds, even in the midst of humanity's most wicked designs, love, community and action can save us.” —The New York Times Book Review

History of Love – by Nicole Kraus – (272 p.) – 15 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*)

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*)

Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet – by Jamie Ford – (290 p.) – 15 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*)

The House Girl – by Tara Conklin – (370 p.) – 12 copies

First-year law firm associate Lina Sparrow must find someone to serve as the face of a historic class-action lawsuit worth a fortune in reparations for descendants of American slaves. Since it's now suspected that antebellum artist Lu Anne Bell's empathetic depictions of slaves were the work of her house slave, Josephine, Lina is determined to track down one of Josephine's descendants. (*Library Journal*)

The House in the Cerulean Sea—by T.J. Klune— (416 p.)—12 copies + Large Print

"This is a sweet narrative about the value of asking questions and the benefits of giving people (especially children) a chance to be safe, protected, and themselves, regardless of what assumptions one might glean from, say, reading their case file." (*Booklist*)

Housekeeping – by Marilynne Robinson – (219 p.) – 15 copies

Author of *Lila: A Novel*, another title in our collection

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 oversized 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*)

How Lucky – by Will Leitch – (304 p.) – 12 copies

It's rare that a crime novel could be described as lovely, but this is a lovely book. Set in Athens, Georgia, the novel is a model of verisimilitude. It is also beautifully written and suspenseful, at the same time being all about goodness and caring without once being sappy or, well, sentimental. And that is a rare feat in fiction. (Abbreviated from *Booklist*)

The Hundred-Year-Old Man Who Climbed Out the Window and Disappeared – by Jonas Jonasson – (384p.) – 15 copies

Desperate to avoid his 100th birthday party, Allan Karlsson climbs out the window of his room at the nursing home and heads to the nearest bus station, intending to travel as far as his pocket money will take him. But a spur-of-the-moment decision to steal a suitcase from a fellow passenger sends Allan on a strange and unforeseen journey involving, among other things, some nasty criminals, a very large pile of cash, and an elephant named Sonya. It's just another chapter in a life full of adventures for Allan, who has become entangled in the major events of the twentieth century, including the Spanish Civil War and the Manhattan Project. As Allan's colorful and complex history merges with his present-day escapades, readers will be treated to a new and charmingly funny version of world history and get to know a very youthful old man whose global influence knows no age limit. An international best-seller, this is an engaging tale of one man's life lived to the fullest. (*Booklist* review by *Carol Gladstein*)

The Huntress – by Kate Quinn – (530 p.) – 12 copies + LP

Suspenseful WWII tale of murder and revenge...this exciting thriller vividly reveals how people face adversity and sacrifice while chasing justice and retribution. (Abbreviated from *Publishers Weekly*)

The Husband's Secret – by Liane Moriarty – (418 p.) – 15 copies

Cecilia Fitzpatrick lives to be perfect: a perfect marriage, three perfect daughters, and a perfectly organized life. Then she finds a letter from her husband, John-Paul, to be opened only in the event of his death. She opens it anyway, and everything she believed is thrown into doubt. Meanwhile, Tess O'Leary's husband, Will, and her cousin and best friend, Felicity, confess they've fallen in love, so Tess takes her young son, Liam, and goes to Sydney to live with her mother. There she meets up with an old boyfriend, Connor Whitby, while enrolling Liam in St. Angela's Primary School, where Cecilia is the star mother. Rachel Crowley, the school secretary, believes that Connor, St. Angela's PE teacher, is the man who, nearly three decades before, got away with murdering her daughter – a daughter for whom she is still grieving. (Abbreviated from *Publishers Weekly*)

The Hypnotist's Love Story – by Liane Moriarty – (466 pages) – 13 copies

“A witty modern love story in the age of cohabitation, blended families, and second chances, this is a compassionate, absorbing tale. Moriarty has crafted an incredibly likable heroine in Ellen, the hypnotherapist who can solve her clients' problems but can't seem to keep her own life from spiraling into soap opera.” (*Booklist*)

The Illusion of Separateness – by Simon Van Booy – (208 p.) – 13 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*)

In the Lake of the Woods – by Tim O'Brien – (320 p.) – 15 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*)

In the Time of the Butterflies – by Julia Alvarez – (321 p.) – 15 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*)

The Invention of Wings – by Sue Monk Kidd – (359 p.) – 14 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 Kitchen House – by Kathleen Grissom – (365 p.) – 15 copies + Large Print + Audio (CD)

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. (Abbreviated from *Publishers Weekly*)

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*)

The Last Blue – by Isla Morley – (328 p.) – 12 copies

"Morley has constructed a memorable and moving narrative, complicated by the troubles of the past and shadowed by the risk of betrayal, which probes what it means to truly be seen and understood for oneself." (*Booklist*)

The Last Bookshop in London—by Madeline Martin—(320 p.)—13 copies + Large Print

"During times of crisis, who can deny the comfort of books and reading? Deftly written, and testament to survival in a challenging time, this book is a soothing and reassuring read." (*Library Journal*)

The Last Days of Dogtown – by Anita Diamant – (264 p.) – 12 copies

A dying Massachusetts town in the early decades of the 19th century forms the evocative backdrop for a richly imagined cast of characters. All Dogtown's residents have suffered blows from a brutal society, or fate's random workings, or both. Moving, absorbing and engaging first-rate fiction that will appeal to the literary-minded as well as those in search of just a plain-old good read. (Abbreviated from *Kirkus Reviews*)

The Last Runaway – by Tracy Chevalier – (301 p.) – 15 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. (Abbreviated from *Booklist* review by *Vanessa Bush*)

The Librarian of Auschwitz – by Antonio Iturbe – (407 p.) – 12 copies + Large Print

A young man named Fredy Hirsch maintains a school in Bllb, right under the noses of the Nazis. In Fredy's classroom, Dita discovers something wonderful: a dangerous collection of eight smuggled books. The tale, based on the real life of Dita Polach Kraus and the events of 1944 and 1945, intertwines the stories of several real people. (Abbreviated from *Kirkus Reviews*)

The Light Between Oceans – by M.L. Stedman – (343 p.) – 15 copies + audio (CD)

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*)

Lila: a Novel – by Marilynne Robinson – (261 pages) – 13 copies

Author of *Housekeeping*, another title in our collection

This is a lovely and touching story that grapples with the universal question of how God can allow his children to suffer. Recommended for fans of Robinson as well as those who enjoyed Elizabeth Strout's *Olive Kitteridge*, another exploration of pain and loneliness set against the backdrop of a small town." (*Library Journal* review by *Evelyn Beck*)

The Lilac Girls – by Martha Hall Kelly – (476 p.) – 15 copies + Large Print

Kelly's compelling first novel follows three women through the course of World War II and beyond. Caroline, a wealthy New Yorker, volunteers at the French consulate in New York, assisting refugees and raising funds. Kasia, a young woman living in Poland during the Nazi invasion, works for the resistance until she is captured and sent to Ravensbruck, the women's concentration camp. There, she encounters Herta, a doctor hired to help execute inmates and perform experiments. Though her mother is Herta's trusted assistant, and even saved a camp guard's life, Kasia is operated on, joining the "Rabbits," inmates deformed from their surgeries. Meanwhile, Caroline finds herself tasked with keeping track of the growing concentration camp network for the consulate, learned from British intelligence. After the war, she travels to France to assist in locating missing people, where she learns about the Rabbits, including Kasia, who is struggling to let go of her anger and move on with her life. Despite some horrific scenes, this is a page-turner demonstrating the tests and triumphs civilians faced during war, complemented by Kelly's vivid depiction of history and excellent characters. (Abbreviated from *Publishers Weekly*)

Little Bee – by Chris Cleave – (271 p.) – 15 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)

Little Fires Everywhere – by Celest Ng – (338 p.) – 12 copies + Large Print

"An intricate and captivating portrait of an eerily perfect suburban town with its dark undertones not-quite-hidden from view and a powerful and suspenseful novel about motherhood . . . Ng explores the complexities of adoption, surrogacy, abortion, privacy, and class, questioning all the while who earns, who claims, and who loses the right to be called a mother . . . an impressive accomplishment."

(Abbreviated from *Publishers Weekly*)

The Little Old Lady Who Broke All the Rules – by Catharina Ingelman-Sundberg – (389 pages) – 13 copies

Instead of hyperbolic, mustache-twirling villains, Ingelman-Sundberg deftly orchestrates the twists and turns in the plot through the foibles of real life, capturing the rebelliousness percolating just under the surface of ignored, shuffled away elderly folks in this merry, lighthearted caper. (*Kirkus Reviews*)

The Little Paris Bookshop – by Nina George – (370 p.) – 15 copies + Large Print

Parisian bookseller Jean Perdu has lived in a time capsule of his own grief. Twenty-one years ago, his lover, Manon, left, leaving behind only a letter to explain herself – which Jean never opened. Ever since, Jean has devoted his life to his floating bookstore, the Literary Apothecary, a barge docked on the Seine. He can diagnose a shopper's ills (ennui, disappointment, a range of fears) and select the correct literary remedy. When heartbroken Catherine moves into his building, Jean brings her an old table and a stack of books to cure her crying. In the table Catherine finds Manon's unopened letter and demands Jean read it, or she will. A charming novel that believes in the healing properties of fiction, romance, and a summer in the south of France. (Abbreviated from *Kirkus Reviews*)

Lost and Found Bookshop – by Susan Wiggs – (355 p.) – 12 copies + Large Print

A gentle love story perfect for anyone looking for love amid personal, family, and financial crises. (*Kirkus Reviews*)

The Lost Wife – by Alyson Richman – (334 p.) – 15 copies + Large Print

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.) – 15 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*)

Mad Honey—by Jodi Picoult and Jennifer Finney Boylan—(432 p.)—12 copies + Large Print

"Alternatingly heart-pounding and heartbreaking . . . This collaboration between two best-selling authors seamlessly weaves together Olivia and Lily's journeys, creating a provocative exploration of the strength that love and acceptance require." (*The Washington Post*)

The Magician's Assistant – by Ann Patchett – (357 p.) – 12 copies

For two decades, Sabine has loved the magician Parsifal and served as his assistant. Theirs is an unorthodox relationship, however, for Parsifal loves men. When Parsifal's lover dies of AIDS, he marries Sabine so that she will be his widow. When Parsifal dies, Sabine receives some surprising news about his will. Believing her husband to have no living relatives, she is shocked to learn of a trust fund established for a mother and two sisters in Nebraska. When his family contacts her, she introduces them to the Los Angeles Parsifal. She then visits them in Nebraska to discover the truth about the man she loved and thought she knew, gaining insight into herself as well. (*Library Journal* review by *Kimberly G. Allen*)

Maisie Dobbs – by Jacqueline Winspeare – (292 pages) – 14 copies

From its dedication to the author's paternal grandfather and maternal grandmother, who were both injured during World War I, to its powerful conclusion, this is a poignant and compelling story that explores war's lingering and insidious impact on its survivors. The book opens in spring 1929 as Maisie Dobbs opens an office dedicated to "discreet investigations" and traverses back and forth between her present case and the long shadows cast by World War I. What starts out as a plea by an anxious husband for Maisie to discover why his wife regularly lies about her whereabouts turns into a journey of discovery whose answers and indeed whose very questions lie in a quiet rural cemetery where many war dead are buried. (Abbreviated from *Library Journal* review by *Caroline Hallsworth*)

Major Pettigrew's Last Stand – by Helen Simonson – (384 p.) – 15 copies + 2 Large Print + audio (CD)

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*)

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

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. (Abbreviated from *Booklist* review by *Carol Haggas*)

March – by Geraldine Brooks – (304 p.) – 15 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*)

Me Before You – by JoJo Moyes – (369 p.) – 15 copies + audio (CD)

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*)

Memoirs of a Geisha – by Arthur Golden – (428 p.) – 15 copies

Sold as a child by her financially desperate father, Chiyo is placed in a house for geisha as the personal maid to Hatsumomo, one of Kyoto's most sought-after geisha. Chiyo's position is one of indentured servitude: she may not leave until she has repaid all her living expenses and even her original purchase cost. After many vicissitudes, Chiyo is transformed into a celebrated geisha called Sayuri. Despite legions of admirers however, Chiyo/Sayuri secretly pines for an unattainable man. Counter to everything geisha are taught, Chiyo learns that her own feelings do matter, and honoring them results in a well-earned, intelligent and satisfyingly happy ending. (Abbreviated from *Publishers Weekly*)

The Memory Keeper's Daughter – by Kim Edwards – (401 p.) – 15 copies + Large Print

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*)

Mercy Snow – by Tiffany Baker – (324 p.) – 13 copies + Audio (CD)

Titan Falls, N.H., in the mid-1990s – a paper mill town on the brink of economic collapse. Nineteen-year-old Mercy Snow has returned to her family's plot of land in Titan Falls with her older brother, Zeke, and younger sister, Hannah. The Snow siblings have nothing but a rusted-out RV and a reputation for trouble that they owe to their parents and grandparents. One night, a bus returning from a high school trip is run off the road, killing a local girl. Locals blame Zeke, whose crashed car was found not far from the bus. But Mercy knows it wasn't Zeke's fault and is determined to clear her brother's name. The McAllisters, who own the paper mill and therefore run the town, are just as determined to stop Mercy before her quest uncovers the family's long-buried secrets. Baker slowly but confidently unravels a gripping tale of love, justice, and redemption, set in a town where all three seem just a little out of reach. (*Publishers Weekly*)

The Mermaid Chair – by Sue Monk Kidd – (332 p.) – 15 copies + audio (CD)

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*)

The Miniaturist – by Jessie Burton – (392 p.) – 15 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*)

Moloka'i – by Alan Brennert – (384 pages) – 15 copies

Brennert's compassion makes Rachel a memorable character, and his smooth storytelling vividly brings early 20th-century Hawaii to life. Leprosy may seem a macabre subject, but Brennert transforms the material into a touching, lovely account of a woman's journey as she rises above the limitations of a devastating illness. (*Publishers Weekly*)

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 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. (Abbreviated from *Publishers Weekly*)

Mrs. Lincoln's Dressmaker – by Jennifer Chiaverini – (350 p.) – 15 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. (Abbreviated from *Booklist* review by *Susan Maguire*)

Mrs. Poe – by Lynn Cullen – (310 p.) – 12 copies + Large Print

"Readers can expect a page-turning tale exposing the transgressions, antics, and heroics behind a literary icon. Literary fiction fans and readers who loved Paula McLain's *The Paris Wife* will relish another novel based on historical scandal and romance." (*Library Journal*)

Mudbound – by Hillary Jordan – (324 p.) – 12 copies

At the end of World War II, Henry [McAllan] drags his [family] off to a vile, primitive farm in the backwaters of Mississippi. Promised an antebellum plantation, [wife] Laura finds that Henry has been fleeced and her

family is soon living in a bleak, weather-beaten farmhouse lacking running water and electricity. Resigned to an uncomfortable truce, the McAllans stubbornly and meagerly carve out a living on the unforgiving Delta. Their unsteady marriage becomes more complicated with the arrival of Henry's enigmatic brother Jamie. Punctuated by an illicit affair, a gruesome hate crime, and finally a quiet, just murder in the night, the book imparts misery upon the wicked – but the innocent suffers as well. (Abbreviated from *Kirkus Reviews*)

My Antonia – by Willa Cather – (238 pages) – 12 copies

No romantic novel ever written in America, by man or woman, is one half so beautiful as *My Antonia*. – H. L. Mencken, 1918

My Grandmother Asked Me to Tell You She's Sorry – by Fredrik Backman – (370 p.) – 15 copies + audio (CD)

“Every bit as churlish but lovable as Backman's cantankerous protagonist in his debut, *A Man Called Ove* (2014), precocious Elsa will easily work her way into the hearts of readers who like characters with spunk to spare. A delectable homage to the power of stories to comfort and heal, Backman's tender tale of the touching relationship between a grandmother and granddaughter is a tribute to the everlasting bonds of deep family ties.” (*Booklist*)

My Sister's Keeper – by Jodi Piccolt – (500 p.) – 15 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 decides 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*)

Mystic River – by Dennis Lehane – (472 p.) – 15 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 Nightingale – by Kristin Hannah – (564 pages) – 15 copies

1940: Viann has said goodbye to husband Antoine, who's off to hold the Maginot line against invading Germans. She returns to tending her small farm, Le Jardin, in the Loire Valley, teaching at the local school and coping with daughter Sophie's adolescent rebellion. Soon, that world is upended: The Germans march into Paris and refugees flee south, overrunning Viann's land. Her long-estranged younger sister, Isabelle, who has been kicked out of multiple convent schools, is sent to Le Jardin by Julien, their father in Paris, a drunken, decidedly unpaternal Great War veteran. As the depredations increase in the occupied zone – food rationing, systematic looting, and the billeting of a German officer, Capt. Beck, at Le Jardin – Isabelle's outspokenness is a liability. She joins the Resistance, volunteering for dangerous duty: shepherding downed Allied airmen across the Pyrenees to Spain. Code-named the Nightingale, Isabelle will rescue many before she's captured. Meanwhile, Viann's journey from passive to active resistance is less dramatic but no less wrenching. (Abbreviated from *Kirkus Reviews*)

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 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 humanity. (*Goodreads*)

One Thousand White Women: The Journal of May Dodd – by Jim Fergus – (434 p.) – 15 copies

Little Wolf comes to Washington and suggests to President Grant that peace between the Whites and Cheyenne could be established if the Cheyenne were given white women as wives, and that the tribe would agree to raise the children from such unions. The thought of miscegenation naturally enough astounds Grant, but he sees a certain wisdom in trading 1,000 white women for 1,000 horses, and he secretly approves the Brides for Indians treaty. He recruits women from jails, penitentiaries, debtors' prisons, and mental institutions – offering full pardons or unconditional release. May Dodd, born to wealth in Chicago in 1850, had left home in her teens and become the mistress of her father's grain-elevator foreman. Her outraged father had her kidnaped, imprisoning her in a monstrous lunatic asylum. When Grant's offer arrives, she leaps at it and soon finds herself traveling west with hundreds of white and black would-be brides. An impressive historical [novel], terse, convincing, and affecting.

(Abbreviated from *Kirkus Reviews*)

The Only Woman in the Room – by Marie Benedict – (297 p.) – 12 copies + Large Print

Hedy Kiesler is lucky. Her beauty leads to a starring role in a controversial film and marriage to a powerful Austrian arms dealer, allowing her to evade Nazi persecution despite her Jewish heritage. But Hedy is also intelligent. At lavish Vienna dinner parties, she overhears the Third Reich's plans. One night in 1937, desperate to escape her controlling husband and the rise of the Nazis, she disguises herself and flees her husband's castle. She lands in Hollywood, where she becomes Hedy Lamarr, screen star. But Hedy is keeping a secret even more shocking than her Jewish heritage: she is a scientist. She has an idea that might help the country and that might ease her guilt for escaping alone – if anyone will listen to her.

(Abbreviated from *Bookreporter.com*)

Orphan Train – by Christina Baker – (273 p.) – 15 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*)

Other Birds —by Sarah Addison Allen—(352 p.)—12 copies + Large Print

“If you're looking for a bit of mystery, whimsical characters and a keen sense of place, *Other Birds* offers all these delights and more. Allen immerses readers in this island world, as well as in the processes of self-discovery, the experiences of being haunted and the gift of surrendering to what we can and cannot control.” --Book Page

The Other Boleyn Girl – by Phillipa Gregory – (661 p.) – 13 copies + Large Print

Before Henry VIII ever considered making Anne Boleyn his wife, her older sister, Mary, was his mistress. Historical novelist Gregory uses the perspective of this "other Boleyn girl" to reveal the rivalries and intrigues swirling through England. The sisters and their brother George were raised with one goal: to advance the Howard family's interests, especially against the Seymours. Gregory captures not only the dalliances of court but the panorama of political and religious clashes throughout Europe. (Abbreviated from *Library Journal* review by *Kathy Piehl*)

The Other Einstein – by Marie Benedict – (314 p.) – 13 copies

Afflicted with a congenital hip defect, Mileva grows up convinced she will always be disdained and will never marry. Her only hope for happiness lies in physics; indeed, she sees God in the details of the mathematical universe. Fortunately, her father supports her unconventional destiny. Soon after moving to Zurich to study at the Swiss Federal Polytechnic, Mileva has not only gained a circle of like-minded girlfriends, but also attracted the attention of a disheveled classmate: Albert. Despite Mileva's reticence,

Albert quickly ensconces himself in her life, joining in spirited musical evenings previously reserved for her girlfriends, pulling her into intellectual debates at cafes, and ultimately seducing her into his bed. Enthralled by her first love, Mileva wonders whether marrying Albert is wise: what will become of her own dreams? Benedict's debut novel carefully traces Mileva's life – from studious schoolgirl to bereaved mother – with attention paid to the conflicts between personal goals and social conventions. (Abbreviated from *Kirkus Reviews*)

The Paris Architect – by Charles Belfoure – (367 p.) – 13 copies

Architect and debut author Belfoure's portrayal of Vichy France is both disturbing and captivating, and his beautiful tale demonstrates that while human beings are capable of great atrocities, they have a capacity for tremendous acts of courage as well. (*Library Journal*)

The Paris Seamstress – by Natasha Lester – (447 p.) – 13 copies

Fearing repercussions from the Germans for aiding the French resistance, seamstress Estella Bisette leaves Paris for New York in 1940. Once shipboard, she meets Sam, a talented American pattern cutter; after starting work in New York, Estella befriends Janie, a beautiful Australian model. Sam and Janie join Estella at a high-society party, where Estella shares a kiss with Alex Montrose, a British spy she'd met in Paris. But Estella discovers that Alex kissed her believing that she was Lena Shaw, a woman who looks exactly like Estella. Fast-forward to 2015 New York City, where Fabienne Bisette attends the annual Met Gala for an exhibit honoring her grandmother Estella, now a famed designer. At her grandmother's urging, Fabienne spends a weekend in Paris and meets Tiffany designer Will Ogilvie. Will and Fabienne fall in love, but their relationship is hampered by the distance between her home in Australia and his in New York. Their complicated romance is expertly juxtaposed against the story of Estella's life as she struggles to become successful and copes with the secrets her mother hid from her, including why she and Lena look so much alike. This rich, memorable novel unfolds beautifully from start to finish. (*Publishers Weekly*)

The Paris Wife – by Paula McLain – (320 p.) – 15 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*)

People of the Book: A Novel – by Geraldine Brooks – (368 p.) – 14 copies + audio (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*)

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. (*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 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 ends abruptly 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. (*Booklist* review by *Kristine Huntley*)

The Personal Librarian – by Marie Benedict and Victoria Christopher Murray – (324 p.) –12 copies + Large Print

“Every element of this blockbuster historical novel is compelling and revelatory, beginning with the bedazzling protagonist based with awestruck care on Belle da Costa Greene... a novel of enthralling drama, humor, sensuality, and insight. ... [a] resounding tale of a brilliant and resilient woman defying sexism, classism, and racism during the brutality of Jim Crow. Benedict and Murray do splendidly right by Belle in this captivating and profoundly enlightening portrayal.” (*Booklist*)

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. (Abbreviated from *Booklist* review by *Carolyn Kubisz*)

The Pilot's Wife – by Anita Shreve – (293 pages) – 15 copies

News of Jack Lyons's fatal crash sends his wife into shock and emotional numbness. The situation becomes even more dire when the plane's black box is recovered, pinning responsibility for the crash on Jack. To clear his name, Kathryn searches for all clues to the hours before the flight. Yet each discovery forces her to realize that she didn't know her husband of 16 years at all. Shreve's complex and highly convincing treatment of Kathryn's dilemma, coupled with intriguing minor characters and an expertly paced plot, makes *The Pilot's Wife* really take off. (Abbreviated from *Amazon*)

The Postmistress – by Sarah Blake - (384 p.) – 15 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*)

Prayers for Sale – by Sandra Dallas – (305 p.) – 15 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. (Abbreviated from *Booklist*)

Pride and Prejudice – by Jane Austen – (384 p.) – 15 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 neighborhood. "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*)

Project Hail Mary—by Andy Weir—(496 p.)—12 copies + Large Print

"The Martian" author centers on the sole survivor of a spaceship sent to save humanity and puts him through his paces in a complex, science-filled story that's also about empathy and friendship found in the most unlikely of places. usatoday.com

A Quilt for Christmas – by Sandra Dallas – (242 p.) – 13 copies

A Union soldier's wife wonders what happened to the quilt she sent him for Christmas, even as she adjusts to widowhood and creates a new life with other women touched by war. Dallas takes an interesting look at the lives of women left behind during the Civil War, especially in ambivalent Kansas, and grounds her characters in authentic struggles of love and hate, right and wrong, trespasses and forgiveness. Elegant, thought-provoking and quietly powerful. (Abbreviated from *Kirkus Reviews*)

The Reader – by Bernhard Schlink – (218 p.) – 15 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*)

The Readers of Broken Wheel Recommend – by Katarina Bivald – (384 p.) – 13 copies

This gentle, intelligent Midwestern tale will captivate fans of Antoine Laurain's *The Red Notebook*, Nina George's *The Little Paris Bookshop*, and Gabrielle Zevin's *The Storied Life of A.J. Fikry*. An ideal book group selection, it reminds us why we are book lovers and why it's nice to read a few happy endings." (Abbreviated from *Library Journal*)

The Reading List – by Sara Nisha Adams – (373 p.) – 12 copies + Large Print

An aging widower and a lonely teenage girl form an unlikely friendship by bonding over books. Told from the perspectives of both Aleisha and Mukesh, as well as a sampling of other characters, the story shows an insightful empathy for difficulties faced at divergent life stages. A quiet and thoughtful look into loneliness, community, and the benefits of reading. (Abbreviated from *Kirkus Reviews*)

The Red Tent – by Anita Diamant – (321 pages) – 15 copies

Skillfully interweaving biblical tales with events and characters of her own invention, Diamant's first novel re-creates the life of Dinah, daughter of Leah and Jacob, from her birth and happy childhood in Mesopotamia through her years in Canaan and death in Egypt. When Dinah reaches puberty and enters the Red Tent (the place women visit to give birth or have their monthly periods), her mother and Jacob's three other wives initiate her into the religious and sexual practices of the tribe. Diamant sympathetically

describes Dinah's doomed relationship with Shalem, son of a ruler of Shechem, and his brutal death at the hands of her brothers. Following the events in Canaan, a pregnant Dinah travels to Egypt, where she becomes a noted midwife (Abbreviated from *Library Journal*)

The Reluctant Midwife – by Patricia Harman – (409 p.) – 11 copies +3 Large Print

"This poignant, powerful novel does not shy away from the gruesome facts of life and death. Fans of the BBC's *Call the Midwife* and Carol Cassella's medically minded novels will enjoy Harman's inspirational and introspective story." (*Booklist*)

Remarkable Creatures: A Novel – by Tracy Chevalier – (310 p.) – 15 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*)

Remarkably Bright Creatures—by Shelby Van Pelt—(384 p.)—12 copies + Large Print

Elderly Tova befriends Marcellus, a smart octopus in Sowell Bay Aquarium. As Tova confronts her painful past and estranged family, Cameron, searching for his father, comes into her life. Through surprising revelations, they discover their deep connection and the truth behind Tova's son's death.

(<https://booksthatslay.com>)

Resistance – by Anita Shreve – (222 p.) – 15 copies

In December 1943, an American fighter plane is downed near a small village in Belgium. The pilot, Lt. Ted Brice, is rescued by a member of the local resistance movement. As he is hidden in the small attic at the home of Claire Daussois, he becomes acutely aware of the danger to himself as well as his hostess and her husband. A bond develops between Claire and Ted during his 20-day stay that changes both of their lives forever. Through this fast-paced novel, [the reader] will gain insight into the unthinkable horrors of World War II-German retribution, village collaborators, and local resistance workers. (Abbreviated from *School Library Journal*)

The Road – by Cormac McCarthy – (287 p.) – 15 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*)

The Rosie Project – by Graeme Simsion–(292 p.) – 15 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*)

The Scribe of Siena – by Melodie Winawer – (452 p.) – 13 copies

When accomplished neurosurgeon Beatrice Trovato’s beloved brother passes away, she welcomes the unexpected trip to the Tuscan city of Siena to resolve his estate, even as she wrestles with grief. But as she delves deeper into her brother’s affairs, she discovers intrigue she never imagined – a 700-year-old conspiracy to decimate the city. After uncovering the journal and paintings of Gabriele Accorsi, the fourteenth-century artist at the heart of the plot, Beatrice finds a startling image of her own face and is suddenly transported to the year 1347. She awakens in a Siena unfamiliar to her, one that will soon be hit by the Plague. Beatrice falls in love – not only with Gabriele, but also with the beauty and cadence of medieval life. As the Plague and the ruthless hands behind its trajectory threaten not only her survival but also Siena’s very existence, Beatrice must decide in which century she belongs. (Abbreviated from *Goodreads*)

Sea Glass – by Anita Shreve – (400 p.) – 15 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*)

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

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*)

The Secret Life of Sunflowers—by Marta Molnar—(392 p.)—14 copies + Large Print

When Hollywood auctioneer Emsley Wilson finds her famous grandmother’s diary while cleaning out her New York brownstone, the pages are full of surprises. The first surprise is, the diary isn’t her grandmother’s. It belongs to Johanna Bonger, Vincent van Gogh’s sister-in-law. Johanna inherited Vincent van Gogh’s paintings. They were all she had, and they weren’t worth anything. She was a 28 year old widow with a baby in the 1800s, without any means of supporting herself, living in Paris where she barely spoke the language. Yet she managed to introduce Vincent’s legacy to the world. The inspiration couldn’t come at a better time for Emsley. With her business failing, an unexpected love turning up in her life, and family secrets unraveling, can she find answers in the past? BookLife.com

Shanghai Girls – by Lisa See – (309 p.) – 15 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. (*Amazon*)

The Silver Star – by Jeannette Walls – (267 p.) – 15 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. (Abbreviated from *Booklist*)

A Single Thread – by Tracy Chevalier – (318 p.) – 12 copies + Large Print

"Set in the 1930s, Chevalier's new novel follows a woman whose fiancé died in World War I and who finds a sense of community among the guild of needlewomen embroidering kneelers for the pews at one of Britain's great cathedrals."(*The New York Times*)

Small Great Things – by Jodi Picoult – (503 p.) – 15 copies

Ruth Jefferson is a labor and delivery nurse at a Connecticut hospital with more than twenty years' experience. During her shift, Ruth begins a routine checkup on a newborn, only to be told a few minutes later that she's been reassigned to another patient. The parents are white supremacists and don't want Ruth, who is African American, to touch their child. The hospital complies with their request, but the next day, the baby goes into cardiac distress while Ruth is alone in the nursery. Does she obey orders, or does she intervene? (*Goodreads*)

Snow Falling on Cedars – by David Guterson – (459 p.) – 15 copies

Old passions, prejudices, and grudges surface in a Washington State Island town when a Japanese man stands trial for the murder of a fisherman in the 1950s. Guterson... has written a thoughtful, poetic first novel, a cleverly constructed courtroom drama with detailed, compelling characters. As a thick snowstorm whirls outside the courtroom, the story is unburied. The same incidents are recounted several times, with each telling revealing new facts. In the end, justice and morality are proven to be intimately woven with beauty – the kind of awe and wonder that children feel for the world. Packed with lovely moments and as compact as haiku – at the same time, a page-turner full of twists. (Abbreviated from *Kirkus Reviews*)

Snow Flower and the Secret Fan – by Lisa See – (288 p.) – 15 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 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*)

Someone Else’s Shoes – by Jojo Moyes - (435 p.) - 12 copies + Large Print

"A mix up at a gym forces two very different women to literally walk in each other's shoes, leading to a complete breakdown and reinvention of their current lives and world views. Sisterhood, mental health, a risky heist, romance, regret...this book has everything in perfect proportion and is a true page-turner to boot. Readers will love every page of this fantastic book." (*Library Journal* review by *Sharon Layburn*)

Specimen Days – by Michael Cunningham – (336 p.) – 15 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*)

A Spool of Blue Thread – by Anne Tyler – (358 p.) – 15 copies

Tyler writes with witty economy. Denny has a brief, doomed marriage to a woman named Carla who is described as looking "pleasant but distracted, as if she were wondering whether she'd left a burner on at home". It is descriptions of this kind – entertainingly spot-on – that are such a joy. We meet Abby's upwardly mobile father-in-law, Junior, and Linnie, his devoted, apparently pitiable – but triumphantly tenacious – wife. The description of their marriage is one of the novel's highlights, coming to a head in a subtle, agonising disagreement about the colour a swing is to be painted. Junior is a fanatic about taste. His wife wants the swing painted "Swedish blue", a homage to a swing of her youth. Junior tells her the colour is lower-class. Who would have guessed that so much would hang on such a trifling matter? It takes organized wit to write about human muddle as Tyler does, without once losing our attention or the narrative's spool of blue thread. (Abbreviated from *theguardian.com*)

Still Alice – by Lisa Genova – (293 p.) – 15 copies + 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*)

Still Life with Bread Crumbs – by Anna Quindlin – (252 p.) – 15 copies + audio (CD)

At 60, Quindlen's complicated heroine, Rebecca Winter, is strong of body and mind, much less so of heart and bank account. In her late 30s, Rebecca made her name with a series of photographs chronicling her domestic life, which were taken up as landmarks of feminist art. Now all Rebecca has to show for that early success – and the popular work that came afterward, abstract images of her son, Ben – is the beautiful apartment, overlooking Central Park, that she bought with the proceeds. In desperation, if not outright panic, she has sublet the apartment and rented a dilapidated cottage in the countryside far north of Manhattan for a fraction of the price, in the hopes that she can pull herself together, both financially and artistically. (Abbreviated from *The New York Times* review by *Joanna Raykoff*)

Stones from the River – by Ursula Hegi – (525 pages) – 15 copies

Life in small-town Germany (1915-52) is chronicled by Trudi, a dwarf with her own agenda. Trudi, whose birth drove her beautiful mother into madness and early death, carries a heavy burden. Trudi, then, a victim of guilt and madness, is an obvious metaphor for Germany – a witness for the prosecution, "an underground messenger safeguarding her stories." She, too, has allowed herself to be consumed by vengeance and hatred. Taunted and sexually assaulted as a young girl by four local boys, she had wished them ill, plotted their destruction, and now, when they all suffer, she begins to understand the corrosive power of hatred. Meanwhile, the town itself is a microcosm of German history as Trudi records its response to the economically distressed 1920's, the rise of Hitler, the growing anti-Semitism, and the postwar years when everyone wants to forget or deny their Nazi past. Trudi, with her own share of sorrows and joys, survives to tell her story – all about "what to enhance and what to relinquish." (Abbreviated from *Kirkus Reviews*)

The Storied Life of A.J. Fikry – by Gabrielle Zevin – (258 pages) – 15 copies

In this sweet, uplifting homage to bookstores, Zevin perfectly captures the joy of connecting people and books.... Filled with interesting characters, a deep knowledge of bookselling, funny depictions of book clubs and author events, this will prove irresistible to book lovers everywhere. (*Booklist*)

The Storyteller – by Jodi Picoult – (460 p.) – 15 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 to keep the past from dictating the future. (*Amazon*)

Sweet Hereafter – by Russell Banks – (272 p.) – 15 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*)

Sweet Tooth – by Ian McEwan – (376 pages) – 13 copies

Cambridge student Serena Frome's beauty and intelligence make her the ideal recruit for MI5. The year is 1972. The Cold War is far from over. Serena, a compulsive reader of novels, is the perfect candidate to infiltrate the literary circle of a promising young writer named Tom Haley. At first, she loves his stories. Then she begins to love the man. How long can she conceal her undercover life? (Abbreviated from *Goodreads*)

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*)

The Sympathizer: A Novel – by Viet Thanh Nguyen – (385 p.) – 12 copies

Nguyen's cross-grained protagonist exposes the hidden costs in both countries of America's tragic Asian misadventure. Nguyen's probing literary art illuminates how Americans failed in their political and military attempt to remake Vietnam – but then succeeded spectacularly in shrouding their failure in Hollywood distortions. Compelling – and profoundly unsettling. (*Booklist*)

Tattooist of Auschwitz –by Heather Morris – (262 p.) –14 copies

Inside the day-to-day workings of the most notorious German death camp.... Morris interviewed Lale, teasing out his memories and weaving them into her heart-rending narrative of a Jew [who chose] to act with kindness and humanity in a place where both were nearly extinct. (*BookPage*)

The Tea Girl of Hummingbird Lane – by Lisa See – (364 p.) – 13 copies

With vivid and precise details about tea and life in rural China, Li-Yan's gripping journey to find her daughter comes alive. (*Publishers Weekly*)

Tell the Wolves I'm Home – by Carol Rifka Brunt – (360 p.) – 14 copies

Fourteen-year-old June is a loner whose favorite activity is going to the woods in her lace-up boots and Gunne Sax dress and pretending she's a medieval falconer. It's the 1980s, and the only person who understands June is her gay uncle Finn, a famous artist dying of AIDS. June's visits with him in New York listening to Mozart and exploring the city have made her older sister Greta jealous. A popular girl with a starring role in the school musical, Greta treats June cruelly, hiding her devastation that they are no

longer best friends. In the end, Finn's final creation, a portrait he painted of June and Greta, along with his secret lover, Toby, serve to unite the sisters. (Abbreviated from *Library Journal* review by Joy Humphrey)

The Tenth Circle – by Jodi Picoult – (385 p.) – 15 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 during a lifetime – or if your mistakes are carried forever. (*Amazon*)

The Things They Carried – by Tim O'Brien – (246 pages) – 15 copies + Large Print + audio (CD)

"O'Brien's meditations – on war and memory, on darkness and light – suffuse the entire work with a kind of poetic form, making for a highly original, fully realized novel. Beautifully honest. The book is persuasive in its desperate hope that stories can save us." (*Publishers Weekly*)

Thousand Pieces of Gold – by Ruthanne Lum McCunn – (206 pages) – 15 copies

Thousand Pieces of Gold tells the extraordinary story of Lalu Nathoy, later known as Polly Bemis. Her father calls his thirteen-year-old daughter his "thousand pieces of gold," but when famine strikes northern China in 1871, he is forced to sell her. Lalu is first sold to a brothel and then to a slave merchant bound for America, before being auctioned to a saloonkeeper, and finally offered as a prize in a poker game. A biographical novel, *Thousand Pieces of Gold* is about the life of a remarkable woman and her struggle for respect and dignity in the early American West. (Abbreviated from *Beacon Press*)

Three Junes – by Julia Glass – (353 p.) – 15 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. (*Booklist*)

The Tiger's Wife – by Tea Obreht – (338 pages) – 15 copies

Natalia Stefanovi, a doctor living (and, in between suspensions, practicing) in an unnamed country that's a ringer for Obreht's native Croatia, crosses the border in search of answers about the death of her beloved grandfather, who raised her on tales from the village he grew up in, and where, following German bombardment in 1941, a tiger escaped from the zoo in a nearby city and befriended a mysterious deaf-mute woman. The evolving story of the tiger's wife, as the deaf-mute becomes known, forms one of three strands that sustain the novel, the other two being Natalia's efforts to care for orphans and a wayward family who, to lift a curse, are searching for the bones of a long-dead relative; and several of her grandfather's stories about Gavran Gaile, the deathless man, whose appearances coincide with catastrophe and who may hold the key to all the stories that ensnare Natalia. (Abbreviated from *Publishers Weekly*)

Time and Again – by Jack Finney – (477 p.) – 15 copies

Commercial artist Simon Morley is chosen by a secret U.S. government project to travel back in time to 1882 New York City – just to prove it can be done and to observe. He enjoys the sights of the city at that time: still much farming on Manhattan, the Dakota and Museum of Natural History standing pretty much alone, the arm of the Statue of Liberty standing by itself in Madison Square, and many other things. But he also falls in love with Julia Charbonneau, who is engaged to a brusque and brutal man named Jake

Pickering. It turns out Pickering has some sort of blackmail scheme going, and Si must decide whether to meddle with events. Finney's 1970 novel is nearly a classic: sufficiently rich and accomplished to qualify as literature. (*AllReaders.com*)

To Kill a Mockingbird – by Harper Lee – (323 p.) – 13 copies + Large Print + Audio (CD)

Set in the small Southern town of Maycomb, Alabama, during the Depression, *To Kill a Mockingbird* follows three years in the life of 8-year-old Scout Finch, her brother, Jem, and their father, Atticus – three years punctuated by the arrest and eventual trial of a young black man accused of raping a white woman. Though her story explores big themes, Harper Lee chooses to tell it through the eyes of a child. The result is a tough and tender novel of race, class, justice, and the pain of growing up. (Abbreviated from *Amazon*)

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*)

The Traveler's Gift – by Andy Andrews – (206 pages) – 15 copies

The Traveler's Gift is the allegorical tragedy of one David Ponder, whose woes begin when he loses his job, his confidence and essentially his drive for living. After a succession of losses, Ponder is rendered unconscious after a car accident, and is magically transported into seven key points in history. At each stopping point, he is met by historical figures such as Abraham Lincoln, Anne Frank, King Solomon, Harry Truman and Christopher Columbus, each of whom imparts one of the seven key decisions that Andrews asserts are essential for personal success. After his travel through time, Ponder regains consciousness in a hospital and discovers he is holding letters given to him by the various heroes. Andrews does an exemplary job at providing positive suggestions for overcoming life's obstacles. (Abbreviated from *Publishers Weekly*)

True Sisters – by Sandra Dallas – (336 p.) – 12 copies

In the mid-1800s, Mormon leader Brigham Young instructed the followers of his new religion to leave their lives in the sinful Old World and travel to Zion, or Salt Lake, to what would one day be Utah. At his command, hundreds traveled to Iowa City, the westernmost point of the railroad, and constructed wooden handcarts, chosen for their economy, to make the 1,300-mile trek by foot. This fact-based historical fiction, celebrating sisterhood and heroism, makes for a surefire winner. (Abbreviated from *Kirkus Reviews*)

A Tree Grows in Brooklyn – by Betty Smith – (493 p.) – 15 copies + audio CD

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. (*Amazon* review by *Emilie Coulter*)

Turn of Mind – by Alice LaPlante – (307 p.) – 15 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*)

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*)

Underground Railroad – by Colson Whitehead – (306 pages) – 15 copies + 2 LP

"Each thing had a value... In America the quirk was that people were things." So, observes Ajarry, taken from Africa as a girl in the mid-18th century to be sold and resold and sold again.... The story is literature at its finest and history at its most barbaric. Would that this novel was required reading for every American citizen. (*Publishers Weekly*)

The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry – by Rachael Joyce– (320 p.) –12 copies + Large Print

"A gentle and genteel charmer, brimming with British quirkiness yet quietly haunting in its poignant and wise examination of love and devotion. Sure to become a book-club favorite." (*Booklist*)

Until I Find You – Rea Frey – (306 p.) –12 copies

Nearly blind from a degenerative eye disease, Rebecca is a recent widow and the mother of a three-month-old boy, Jackson. As she struggles with her increasing blindness, grief, and exhaustion, she's sure someone is following her. One day, she leaves her house in Elmhurst, Ill., to take Jackson to the park in his stroller. After a fainting spell, she checks the baby in the stroller and realizes from touching him that he's not Jackson. The police, however, think she's confused, while her friends see no differences. Stuck with a colicky baby she's sure isn't hers, Rebecca is determined to find her son. Fortunately, homicide detective Jake Donovan, Rebecca's childhood friend and ex-boyfriend, reenters her life and helps her try to discover why someone would swap a baby, if in fact she's right and the child she now cares for isn't hers. The answer may lie among Rebecca's circle of friends, some of whom are hiding dark secrets. Frey keeps the tension high until the surprising denouement. This emotional roller coaster satisfies. (*Publishers Weekly*)

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. (Abbreviated from *Publishers Weekly*)

The Wartime Sisters – by Linda Cohen Loigman – (303 p.) – 13 copies

"With a perceptive lens on the challenges of whittling away grievances that have built up over years, *The Wartime Sisters* is a powerful pressure cooker of a family drama." (*Booklist*)

We Begin at the End—by Chris Whitaker— (384 p.)—12 copies + Large Print

"A superb thriller.... Powered by extraordinarily deep character development and an impressively intricate plot, this novel is simultaneously a murder mystery, a love story, and a heartbreaking tragedy. The existential agony is palpable throughout, but so, too, is the hope at the end. Whitaker has upped his game with this emotionally charged page-turner." (*Publishers Weekly*)

We Were the Mulvaneys – Joyce Carol Oates – (454 p.) – 15 copies

The Mulvaney's, six of them, had been riding high; they lived on a prosperous farm in upstate New York and lived well. Now an adult, Judd, the youngest Mulvaney, recounts the events during which "everything came apart for us and was never again put together in quite the same way." At the core of the family troubles was one grievous incident, the rape of Judd's sister. Consequently, Judd, his father, and one of his brothers commit criminal deeds, and the family eventually loses the farm. Predictably for Oates, her impeccable psychological understanding of violence – its roots and ramifications – lies at the heart of a troubling yet ultimately inspiring story of how far down people can go but, holding on together as a family, rise to the surface again. (Abbreviated from *Booklist* review by *Brad Hooper*)

When the Apricots Bloom – by Gina Wilkinson – (306 p.) – 12 copies + Large Print

At night, in Huda's fragrant garden, a breeze sweeps in from the desert encircling Baghdad, rustling the leaves of her apricot trees and carrying warning of visitors at her gate. Huda, a secretary at the Australian embassy, lives in fear of the *mukhabarat* – the secret police who watch and listen for any scrap of information that can be used against America and its allies. They have ordered her to befriend Ally Wilson, the deputy ambassador's wife. Huda has no wish to be an informant, but fears for her teenaged son, who may be forced to join a deadly militia. Nor does she know that Ally has dangerous secrets of her own. Huda's former friend, Rania, enjoyed a privileged upbringing as the daughter of a sheikh. Now her family's wealth is gone, and Rania too is battling to keep her child safe and a roof over their heads. As the women's lives intersect, their hidden pasts spill into the present. Facing possible betrayal at every turn, all three must trust in a fragile, newfound loyalty, even as they discover how much they are willing to sacrifice to protect their families. (*Bookreporter.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*)

When the Killing's Done – by T.C. Boyle – (369 p.) – 13 copies

Boyle's great subject is humankind's blundering relationship with the rest of the living world.... Incisive and caustically witty, Boyle is fluent in evolutionary biology and island biogeography, cognizant of the shared emotions of all sentient beings, in awe over nature's crushing power, and, by turns, bemused and appalled by human perversity. Boyle brings all these powers and concerns to bear as he creates magnetic characters and high suspense, culminating in a piercing vision of our needy, confused, and destructive species thrashing about in the great web of life. (*Booklist* review by *Donna Seaman*)

Whiskey When We're Dry – by John Larison – (387 p.) – 12 copies

In the post-Civil War West, 17-year-old Jessilyn Harney's father dies, leaving their financially strapped homestead in her hands. She decides that the only way of saving it is to track down her errant older brother, Noah – who left several years back and has since become a notorious outlaw – and convince him to return home. Since it's dangerous to be a woman traveling alone, she chooses to masquerade as a boy. Using her talent as a sharpshooter to catch the eye of the state governor, Jessilyn joins his militia on the hunt for her brother, who is regarded as a folk hero by many. (Abbreviated from *Publishers Weekly*)

Whistling Past the Graveyard – by Susan Crandall – (308 p.) – 15 copies

The South on the eve of the civil rights movement, as seen through the eyes of this novel's plucky nine-year-old narrator. Starla Claudelle lives in Mississippi with her stern grandma. Her daddy is away working on an oil rig. Her mama has gone to Nashville to be a star, so Starla decides to head there when she gets

herself in trouble one too many times. She's offered a ride by a black woman named Eula, who has with her a white baby found abandoned on the steps of a church. Eula takes Starla and the baby home, but violence forces them back on the road with no money and a truck about to break down. During their long and sometimes perilous trip, Starla sees first-hand what it's like to be the wrong color in a segregated society, and her keen sense of injustice and need for love help her create a bond with Eula that transcends any barriers. (Abbreviated from *Booklist* review by *Mary Ellen Quinn*)

The Women – by T.C. Boyle – (464 p.) – 15 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*)

The Women in the Castle – by Jessica Shattuck – (353 pages) – 15 copies

Shattuck's characters represent the range of responses to fascism. Her achievement – beyond unfolding a plot that surprises and devastates – is in her subtle exploration of what a moral righteousness like Marianne's looks like in the aftermath of war, when communities and lives must be rebuilt, together. (*New York Times* review by *Mary Pols*)

Wonder Boys – by Michael Chabon – (368 p.) – 15 copies

Chabon's second novel takes place during one extraordinarily hectic weekend during which his crazy hero, Professor Grady Tripp, manages to ruin two marriages, cause the death of a boa constrictor and a dog, save a student's life, attend a disastrous seder and a chaotic writers' conference, and lose the only copy of his manuscript. It is a simultaneously hilarious and insightful tale about the Faustian bargains writers make, the fissures the act of writing rends in the wall between fact and fantasy, and, for good measure, the basic absurdity of human endeavors. It's also an uproarious portrait of the artist as self-indulgent fool. (Abbreviated from *Booklist* review by *Donna Seaman*)

Year of Wonders by Geraldine Brooks – (304 pages) – 14 copies

In 1665, the intense young pastor of a plague-stricken Derbyshire village persuades his parish to quarantine itself from the outside world. This selfless decision leads to the deaths of two-thirds of the inhabitants but saves the surrounding towns, as it did in the case of the historical village that inspired the tale. The novel glitters with careful research into such arcana as seventeenth-century lead-mining, sheep-farming, and, of course, medicine, but its true strength is a deep imaginative engagement with how people are changed by catastrophe. Fear and despair fan the usual petty rivalries of village life into murderous hatreds, and the community fragments just when it should be pulling together. A rare few – including the narrator, a young widow who is a servant of the pastor – discover new strengths and abilities. When the epidemic is over, a year later, the survivors are too weary, damaged, and numb to rejoice. (*The New Yorker*)

NONFICTION, MEMOIRS, ETC.

The Big Burn: Teddy Roosevelt and the Fire that Saved America – 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 Bookseller of Kabul – by Asne Seierstad – (288 p.) – 12 copies

While covering the Northern Alliance's push south into Kabul after routing the Taliban, the author made the acquaintance of Sultan Khan, a bookseller who had been thrown into jail under both the communist and Taliban regimes. When it comes to literature, Sultan is "a freethinker . . . of the opinion that everyone had the right to be heard," and he paid the price for his beliefs. On the home front, however, he's an ingrained patriarch. (Abbreviated from *Kirkus Reviews*)

Born a Crime—by Trevor Noah— (282 p.)—12 copies

"[Noah's] electrifying memoir sparkles with funny stories . . . and his candid and compassionate essays deepen our perception of the complexities of race, gender, and class."—Booklist (starred review)

The Boys in the Boat: Nine Americans and Their Epic Quest for Gold at the 1936 Berlin Olympics – by Daniel James Brown – (370 p.) – 15 copies + audio (CD) + Large Print

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*)

The Color of Water – by James McBride – (291 p.) – 15 copies

Suffused with issues of race, religion and identity. Yet those issues, so much a part of their lives and stories, are not central. The triumph of the book – and of their lives – is that race and religion are transcended in these interwoven histories by family love, the sheer force of a mother's will and her unshakable insistence that only two things really mattered: school and church...it is her voice – unique, incisive, at once unsparing and ironic – that is dominant in this paired history, and its richest contribution....The two stories, son's and mother's, beautifully juxtaposed, strike a graceful note at a time of racial polarization. (*The New York Times*)

Dead Wake – by Eric Larson – (359 pages) – 13 copies + audio (CD) + Large Print

Using archives on both sides of the Atlantic, Larson describes the Lusitania's ominous delayed departure and its distressing reduced speed. He vividly illustrates how these foreboding factors led to terror, tragedy, and ultimately the Great War. Once again, Larson transforms a complex event into a thrilling human-interest story. (*Library Journal* review by *Stephanie Sendaula*)

Dewey: The Small-Town Library Cat Who Touched the Heart of the World – by Vicki Byron with Bret Witter – (271 pages) – 12 copies

One frigid Midwestern winter night in 1988, a ginger kitten was shoved into the after-hours book-return slot at the public library in Spencer, Iowa. And in this tender story, Myron, the library director, tells of the impact the cat, named Dewey Readmore Books, had on the library and its patrons, and on Myron herself. Through her developing relationship with the feline, Myron recounts the economic and social history of Spencer as well as her own success story – despite an alcoholic husband, living on welfare, and health problems ranging from the difficult birth of her daughter, Jodi, to breast cancer. After her divorce, Myron graduated college (the first in her family) and stumbled into a library job. She quickly rose to become director, realizing early on that this "was a job I could love for the rest of my life." Dewey, meanwhile, brings disabled children out of their shells, invites businessmen to pet him with one hand while holding

the *Wall Street Journal* with the other, eats rubber bands and becomes a media darling. (Abbreviated from *Publishers Weekly*)

The Devil in the White City – by Erik Larson – (390 pages) – 15 copies

Before the turn of the 20th century, a city emerged seemingly out of the ash of then dangerous Chicago, a dirty, grimy, teeming place ravaged by urban problems. Daniel Burnham, the main innovator of the White City of the 1892 World's Fair, made certain that it became the antithesis of its parent city, born to glow and gleam with all that the new century would soon offer. While the great city of the future was hastily being planned and built, the specially equipped apartment building of one Herman Webster Mudgett was also being constructed. Living in a nearby suburb and walking among the hundreds of thousands of visitors who would eventually attend the fair, Mudgett, a doctor by profession more commonly known as H.H. Holmes, was really an early serial killer who preyed on the young female fair goers pouring into Chicago. Using the fair as a means of attracting guests to a sparsely furnished "castle" where they ultimately met their end, Holmes committed murder, fraud, and numerous other crimes seemingly without detection until his arrest in 1894. (Abbreviated from *Library Journal* review by *Rachel Collins*)

Don't Let's Go to the Dogs Tonight – by Alexandra Fuller – (315 p.) – 15 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*)

The Dressmaker of Khair Khan – by Gayle Tzemach Lemmon – (235 pages) – 15 copies

In 1996, the Taliban seized control of the Afghan government and “began reshaping the cosmopolitan capital according to their utopian vision of seventh-century Islam.” Radical separation of the sexes became the norm, with public lives and spaces reserved for men only. All women – including educated professionals – were forced into home sequestration. The new order wreaked economic havoc and forced political dissidents, including Kamela's father, to flee for their lives. Desperate to support her family, Kamela, who had trained to become a teacher, took advantage of a loophole in Taliban rules that permitted women to work at home and began sewing clothes for local stores. Though she endured threats of harassment, beating and imprisonment by armed guards, Kamela's business thrived, to the point where the unlikely entrepreneur was able to employ her five sisters. As word of her work spread, so did her client list. Soon, “the dressmaker of Khair Khana” was offering both jobs and training to neighborhood women in dire circumstances. Hardship derailed Kamela's plans to teach high school but allowed her to discover her true calling – helping her people help themselves. (Abbreviated from *Kirkus Reviews*)

Educated—by Tara Westover— (329 p.)—12 copies + audio (CD) + Large Print

Educated is a fascinating book on multiple levels. As a personal journey for Westover, it's triumphant and hopeful. Westover goes from receiving very little education to eventually getting her PhD at Cambridge. As a story, it's unique. Westover's experiences make for a distinctive perspective, accented with colorful anecdotes. (Abbreviated from *www.the-bibliofile.com*)

Epitaph for a Peach – by David Mas Masumoto – (233 p.) – 15 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.) – 15 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*)

Galileo’s Daughter: A Historical Memoir of Science, Faith, and Love – by Dava Sobel – (432 p.) – 15 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*)

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

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*)

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*)

Hillbilly Elegy – by J. D. Vance – (257 p.) – 15 copies + audio (CD)

A Yale Law School graduate’s account of his traumatic hillbilly childhood and the plight of America’s angry white working class. “Americans call them hillbillies, rednecks, or white trash,” writes Vance, a biotech executive and National Review contributor. “I call them neighbors, friends, and family.” (Abbreviated from *Kirkus Reviews*)

The Hungry Ocean– by Linda Greenlaw – (258 p.) – 12 copies

“The Hungry Ocean” is a beautiful book for what it says about the love of the sea – sea fever, Greenlaw calls it. And it is a story of triumph, of a woman not only making it but succeeding at the highest level in

one of the most male-dominated and most dangerous professions. As Greenlaw offhandedly states early on, while heading out to sea, "Being a woman hasn't been a big deal." But being the captain of the sword boat Hannah Boden has been, and she tells about it with robust passion. (Abbreviated from *The New York Times*)

The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks – by Rebecca Skloot – (369 p.) – 15 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*)

Isaac's Storm – by Eric Larson – (316 p.) – 13 copies

Torqued by drama and taut with suspense, this absorbing narrative of the 1900 hurricane that inundated Galveston, Tex., conveys the sudden, cruel power of the deadliest natural disaster in American history. Told largely from the perspective of Isaac Cline, the senior U.S. Weather Bureau official in Galveston at the time, the story considers an era when ""the hubris of men led them to believe they could disregard even nature itself."" Larson expertly captures the power of the storm itself and the ironic, often catastrophic consequences of the unpredictable intersection of natural force and human choice. (Abbreviated from *Publishers Weekly*)

Just Mercy – by Bryan Stevenson – (316 pages) –15 copies

"*Just Mercy* is every bit as moving as *To Kill a Mockingbird*, and in some ways more so.... [It] demonstrates, as powerfully as any book on criminal justice that I've ever read, the extent to which brutality, unfairness, and racial bias continue to infect criminal law in the United States. But while [Bryan] Stevenson tells an utterly damning story of deep-seated and widespread injustice, he also recounts instances of human compassion, understanding, mercy, and justice that offer hope... *Just Mercy* is a remarkable amalgam, at once a searing indictment of American criminal justice and a stirring testament to the salvation that fighting for the vulnerable sometimes yields." (*The New York Review of Books* review by David Cole)

Marley & Me: Life and Love with the World's Worst Dog – by John Grogan – (289 p.) – 15 copies + Large Print

A humorous and loving tribute...Throughout, the family is steadfastly devoted to this badly behaved yet totally lovable and loyal pup. Readers whose dogs would qualify for the "Bad Dog Club" will delight in this tribute." (*Library Journal*)

The Memory Palace – by Mira Bartok – (305 p.) – 15 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 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. (Abbreviated from *Amazon*)

The Monuments Men – by Robert M. Edsel – (426 p.) – 15 copies

From 1939 through the last months of the war, the Nazi army seized priceless paintings, sculptures, tapestries and more, from museums, palaces, cathedrals, private homes, even tiny chapels – the Nazis plundered everything, carting off the cultural history of every nation they entered.

But just as the Allied Forces fought to save the Western world, others fought to save Western Civilization. They were “the Monuments Men,” a handful of soldiers given a unique assignment: to preserve the cultural soul of Europe by protecting Europe’s art. Robert M. Edsel’s masterful book *The Monuments Men* shares their story, in a tale that is part history, part war story and part treasure hunt. Undermanned, undersupplied and with virtually no authority, the Monuments Men (and women) faced bullets, bombs and Nazi booby traps to rescue works by Rembrandt, Da Vinci, Vermeer, Michelangelo and more. (Abbreviated from *BookPage* review by Howard Shirley)

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*)

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*)

The Pianist – by Wladyslaw Szpilman – (224 p.) – 15 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*)

The Professor and the Madman – by Simon Winchester – (242 pages) – 13 copies

William C. Minor (1834-1920) was a Civil War surgeon whose war experience caused his personality to change. He became paranoid and was eventually diagnosed as schizophrenic. After three years in an asylum, he went to Europe in 1871 in pursuit of rest, getting as far as London before his paranoia caught up with him and he killed George Merritt. An English court found him not guilty on the ground of insanity, and Minor was sent to Broadmoor. Coming across a leaflet for volunteers to help compile a history of the English language, Minor offered his services, remaining vague about his background. After 17 years of correspondence, the editor of the came to meet Minor, who had submitted 10,000 definitions to the project, and was surprised that the genius was a patient at the Broadmoor Asylum. Finally released in 1910, Minor returned to the United States. Winchester’s delightful, simply written book tells how a murderer made a huge contribution to what became a major reference source in the Western world. (*Library Journal* review by Michael Sawyer)

Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World That Can’t Stop Talking – by Susan Cain – (266 pages) – 15 copies

An enlightened Wall Street survivor exhorts wallflowers everywhere to embrace their solitude-seeking souls and fully appreciate the power of the lone wolf. Could up to one-half of a nation obsessed with *Jersey Shore* narcissism and *American Idol* fame really be inhabited by reserved, sensitive types? According to Cain, yes – and we better start valuing their insight.... The author’s insights are so rich that

she could pen two separate books: one about parenting an introverted child, and another about how to make an introvert/extrovert relationship work. An intriguing and potentially life-altering examination of the human psyche that is sure to benefit both introverts and extroverts alike. (*Kirkus Reviews*)

The Rainbow Comes and Goes – by Anderson Cooper and Gloria Vanderbilt – (290 p.) – 12 copies

An appealing blend of memoir and inspirational advice, *The Rainbow Comes and Goes* is a beautiful and affectionate celebration of the profound and universal bond between a parent and child, and, like *Tuesdays with Morrie*, a thoughtful reflection on life and love, reminding us of the precious knowledge and insight that remains to be shared, no matter what age we are. (*readinggroupchoices.com*)

Reading Lolita in Tehran – by Azar Nafisi – (347 p.) – 15 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*)

River of Doubt: Theodore Roosevelt's Darkest Journey – by Candice Millard – (432 p.) – 14 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*)

Same Kind of Different as Me – by Ron Hall and Denver Moore – (256 p.) – 15 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*)

Seabiscuit: An American Legend – by Laura Hillenbrand – (339 p.) – 14 copies

“Engrossing . . . Fast-moving . . . More than just a horse's tale, because the humans who owned, trained, and rode Seabiscuit are equally fascinating.... [Hillenbrand] shows an extraordinary talent for describing a horse race so vividly that the reader feels like the rider.” (*Sports Illustrated*)

Slaves in the Family – by Edward Ball – (445 p.) – 15 copies + Large Print

A journalist's exhaustively researched, intensely personal quest confronts the legacy of slavery connecting his South Carolina family and the people they enslaved. Ball's mission, in reckoning with a

past for which he feels accountable, if not responsible, is twofold: explore the story of his white slave-owning ancestors and seek out descendants of the people they bought and sold. Ball's impressive detective work and the black voices it records build a monumental and extraordinary case history of the rise and fall of America's most shameful institution. (Abbreviated from *Kirkus Reviews*)

Soldier Girls: The Battles of Three Women at Home and at War – by Helen Thorpe – (394 pages) – 15 copies

"Thorpe follows three women, tracking their ups and downs with faithful detail in a brilliant tableau of their overlapping lives for 12 years as they do multiple tours in Afghanistan and Iraq and readjust to civilian life...*Soldier Girls* raises important questions about how men and women serve together and the differences in how they experience war, enabling us to see the subtle challenges female soldiers face – the hardships that don't make easy headlines." (*The Washington Post*)

The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down – by Ann Fadiman – (341 p.) –15 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*)

A Street Cat Named Bob – by James Bowen – (310 p.) – 12 copies

Stellar...A beautiful, never maudlin story of second chances for both man and beast and a poignant testimony to how much caring for someone – or some feline – can give you renewed direction where you're down and out. (*Booklist*)

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*)

The Swerve: How the World Became Modern – by Stephen Greenblatt – (263 p.) – 13 copies

"Can a poem change the world? Harvard professor and bestselling Shakespeare biographer Greenblatt ably shows in this mesmerizing intellectual history that it can. A richly entertaining read about a radical ancient Roman text that shook Renaissance Europe and inspired shockingly modern ideas (like the atom) that still reverberate today." (*Newsweek*)

Tattoos on the Heart – by Gregory Boyle – (212 p.) – 13 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. (Abbreviated from *Publishers Weekly*)

Tender at the Bone – by Ruth Reichl – (282 p.) – 15 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*)

Thunderstruck – by Erik Larson – (388 pages) – 15 copies

Larson's page-turner juxtaposes scientific intrigue with a notorious murder in London at the turn of the 20th century. It alternates the story of Marconi's quest for the first wireless transatlantic communication amid scientific jealousies and controversies with the tale of a mild-mannered murderer caught as a result of the invention. The eccentric figures include the secretive Marconi and one of his rivals, physicist Oliver Lodge, who believed that he was first to make the discovery, but also insisted that the electromagnetic waves he studied were evidence of the paranormal. The parallel tale recounts the story of Dr. Hawley Harvey Crippen, accused of murdering his volatile, shrewish wife. As he and his unsuspecting lover attempted to escape in disguise to Quebec on a luxury ocean liner, a Scotland Yard detective chased them on a faster boat. Unbeknownst to the couple, the world followed the pursuit through wireless transmissions to newspapers on both sides of the Atlantic. A public that had been skeptical of this technology suddenly grasped its power. (*School Library Journal* review by *Pat Bangs*)

The Tin Ticket: The Heroic Journey of Australia's Convict Women – by Deborah J. Swiss – (316 pages) – 12 copies

The Tin Ticket takes readers to the dawn of the nineteenth century and into the lives of three women arrested and sent into suffering and slavery in Australia and Tasmania-where they overcame their fates unlike any women in the world. It also tells the tale of Elizabeth Gurney Fry, a Quaker reformer who touched all their lives. Ultimately, this is a story of women who, by sheer force of will, became the heart and soul of a new nation. (*penguinrandomhouse.com*)

Tolstoy and the Purple Chair: My Year of Magical Reading – Nina Sankovich – (222 p.) – 15 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*)

Travels with Charley – by John Steinbeck – (277 p.) – 14 copies + audio (CD)

"The eager, sensuous pages in which he writes about what he [Steinbeck] found and whom he encountered frame a picture of our human nature in the twentieth century which will not soon be surpassed." (*The Atlantic Monthly* review by *Edward Weeks*)

Unbroken: a World War II Story of Survival, Resilience, and Redemption – by Laura Hillenbrand – (406 p.) –15 copies + audio (CD)

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*)

Until Tuesday: A Wounded Warrior and the Golden Retriever Who Saved Him – by Luis Carlos Montalvan – (252 p.) – 15 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*)

West with the Night – by Beryl Markham – (294 pages) – 15 copies

Markham's memoir shies away from personal details and straightforward chronology, instead focusing on vivid scenes gathered from a well-lived life. Rarely does one encounter such an evocative sense of a time and place as she creates. The heat and dust of Africa emanate from her prose. Anyone interested in aviation, in Africa or in simply reading an absorbing book will find much to like in its pages. (Abbreviated from *Aviation History Book Review* by Nate Pederson)

What It Is Like to Go to War – by Karl Marlantes – (254 pages) – 15 copies

"Marlantes brings candor and wrenching self-analysis to bear on his combat experiences in Vietnam, in a memoir-based meditation whose intentions are three-fold: to help soldiers-to-be understand what they're in for; to help veterans come to terms with what they've seen and done; and to help policymakers know what they're asking of the men they send into combat." (*The New Yorker*)

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

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*)

Wisdom of the Last Farmer: The Legacy of Generations – by David Mas Masumoto – (256 p.) – 15 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*)