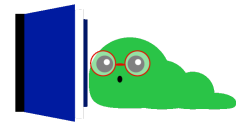


# THE BOOKWORMS

## BOOK CLUB



Free Public Library of Monroe Township  
713 Marsha Ave, Williamstown NJ  
856-629-1212

### **2023 Book Club Reading List**

The Bookworms meet on the 3rd Wednesday of every month at 1pm, except for December. All adults are invited to read along with us and join our monthly discussions held in the library meeting room.

For more information, call 856-629-1212 ext. 206.

#### **January 18 : The Body: a Guide for Occupants by Bill Bryson (612 BRY)**

Bill Bryson once again proves himself to be an incomparable companion as he guides us through the human body—how it functions, its remarkable ability to heal itself, and (unfortunately) the ways it can fail. Full of extraordinary facts (your body made a million red blood cells since you started reading this) and irresistible Brysonesque anecdotes, *The Body* will lead you to a deeper understanding of the miracle that is life in general and you in particular.

#### **February 15 : The Lions of Fifth Avenue by Fiona Davis (F DAV)**

It's 1913, and on the surface, Laura Lyons couldn't ask for more out of life—her husband is the superintendent of the New York Public Library, allowing their family to live in an apartment within the grand building, and they are blessed with two children. But headstrong, passionate Laura wants more, and when she takes a leap of faith and applies to the Columbia Journalism School, her world is cracked wide open. As her studies take her all over the city, she is drawn to Greenwich Village's new bohemia, where she discovers the Heterodoxy Club—a radical, all-female group in which women are encouraged to loudly share their opinions on suffrage, birth control, and women's rights. Soon, Laura finds herself questioning her traditional role as wife and mother. But when valuable books are stolen back at the library, threatening the home and institution she loves, she's forced to confront her shifting priorities head on, and may just lose everything in the process.

#### **March 15 : The Women's March by Jennifer Chiaverini (F CHI)**

Twenty-five-year-old Alice Paul returns to her native New Jersey after several years on the front lines of the suffrage movement in Great Britain. Weakened from imprisonment and hunger strikes, she is nevertheless determined to invigorate the stagnant suffrage movement in her homeland. Nine states have already granted women voting rights, but only a constitutional amendment will secure the vote for all. To inspire support for the campaign, Alice organizes a magnificent procession down Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, DC, the day before the inauguration of President-elect Woodrow Wilson, a firm antisuffragist. Joining the march is thirty-nine-year-old New Yorker Maud Malone, librarian and advocate for women's and workers' rights. Civil rights activist and journalist Ida B. Wells-Barnett resolves that women of color must also be included in the march—and the proposed amendment. Born into slavery in Mississippi, Ida worries that white suffragists may exclude Black women if it serves their own interests. Inspired by actual events, *The Women's March* offers a fascinating account of a crucial but little-remembered moment in American history, a turning point in the struggle for women's rights.

**April 19 : Sense and Sensibility by Jane Austen (F AUS)**

Sense and Sensibility is a story teeming with gossip, lies, betrayal and love. As comes with the responsibility of adulthood, Marianne and Elinor Dashwood must both find suitors, or their prospects for a happy life will most certainly be diminished. Needing to stay with their estranged family in their home, the new dynamics of the household are anything but conventional. Elinor, the more judicious of the two sisters, understands the perils of what's to come should she not find a husband. But Marianne has a different agenda. Believing firmly in the power of love, Marianne holds out hope that when she does marry, it won't only be for financial security.

**May 17 : Songs of Willow Frost by Jamie Ford (F FOR)**

Twelve-year-old William Eng, a Chinese American boy, has lived at Seattle's Sacred Heart Orphanage ever since his mother's listless body was carried away from their small apartment five years ago. On his birthday, William and the other orphans are taken to the historical Moore Theatre, where William glimpses an actress on the silver screen who goes by the name of Willow Frost. Struck by her features, William is convinced that the movie star is his mother, Liu Song. Determined to find Willow and prove that his mother is still alive, William escapes from Sacred Heart with his friend Charlotte. The pair navigate the streets of Seattle, where they must not only survive but confront the mysteries of William's past and his connection to the exotic film star. The story of Willow Frost, however, is far more complicated than the Hollywood fantasy William sees onscreen.

**June 21 : The Sentence by Louise Erdrich (F ERD)**

Louise Erdrich's latest novel, *The Sentence*, asks what we owe to the living, the dead, to the reader and to the book. A small independent bookstore in Minneapolis is haunted from November 2019 to November 2020 by the store's most annoying customer. Flora dies on All Souls' Day, but she simply won't leave the store. Toookie, who has landed a job selling books after years of incarceration that she survived by reading "with murderous attention," must solve the mystery of this haunting while at the same time trying to understand all that occurs in Minneapolis during a year of grief, astonishment, isolation, and furious reckoning.

**July 19 : The Last Mona Lisa by Jonathan Santlofer (F SAN)**

August, 1911: The Mona Lisa is stolen by Vincent Peruggia. Exactly what happens in the two years before its recovery is a mystery. Many replicas of the Mona Lisa exist, and more than one historian has wondered if the painting now returned to the Louvre is a fake, switched in 1911. Present day: Art professor Luke Perrone digs for the truth behind his most famous ancestor: Peruggia. His search attracts an Interpol detective with something to prove and an unfamiliar but curiously helpful woman. Soon, Luke tumbles deep into the world of art and forgery, a land of obsession and danger.

**August 16 : Hamnet by Maggie O'Farrell (F OFA)**

England, 1580: The Black Death creeps across the land, an ever-present threat, infecting the healthy, the sick, the old and the young alike. The end of days is near, but life always goes on. A young Latin tutor—penniless and bullied by a violent father—falls in love with an extraordinary, eccentric young woman. Agnes is a wild creature who walks her family's land with a falcon on her glove and is known throughout the countryside for her unusual gifts as a healer, understanding plants and potions better than she does people. Once she settles with her husband on Henley Street in Stratford-upon-Avon, she becomes a fiercely protective mother and a steadfast, centrifugal force in the life of her young husband, whose career on the London stage is just taking off when his beloved young son succumbs to sudden fever.

**September 20 : Beyond the Crashing Waves by Lilly Mirren (F MIR)**

Mary Roberts is a poor gutter child living in a council flat in 1950's London. When she and her sister are left at an orphanage by their mother, they don't think their lives can get any worse.

Harry Evans is an orphan who finds himself, with Mary and her sister, on board a ship bound for Australia. They're sent to a farm school for children, where abuse and neglect are rife. A journey that will change their lives forever, and from which they'll never return. Married to her dream man, and with a baby on the way, Dr Mia Sato's life is in perfect order. When her beloved grandmother has a fall, the photograph clutched in her hand prompts Mia to ask questions her grandmother isn't willing to answer. When she cries out a confession that rocks Mia to her core, it leads to a shocking discovery of a past filled with lies, broken families and forced child migration.

**October 18 : West With Giraffes by Lynda Rutledge (F RUT)**

It's 1938. The Great Depression lingers. Hitler is threatening Europe, and world-weary Americans long for wonder. They find it in two giraffes who miraculously survive a hurricane while crossing the Atlantic. What follows is a twelve-day road trip in a custom truck to deliver Southern California's first giraffes to the San Diego Zoo. Behind the wheel is the young Dust Bowl rowdy Woodrow Wilson. Inspired by true events, the tale weaves real-life figures with fictional ones, including the world's first female zoo director, a crusty old man with a past, a young female photographer with a secret, and assorted reprobates as spotty as the giraffes. Part adventure, part historical saga, and part coming-of-age love story, West with Giraffes explores what it means to be changed by the grace of animals, the kindness of strangers, the passing of time, and a story told before it's too late.

**November 15 : The Library Book by Susan Orlean (027.479 ORL)**

On the morning of April 28, 1986, a fire alarm sounded in the Los Angeles Public Library. The fire was disastrous: it reached two thousand degrees and burned for more than seven hours. By the time it was extinguished, it had consumed four hundred thousand books and damaged seven hundred thousand more. Investigators descended on the scene, but more than thirty years later, the mystery remains: Did someone purposefully set fire to the library—and if so, who? Weaving her lifelong love of books and reading into an investigation of the fire, award-winning New Yorker reporter and New York Times bestselling author Susan Orlean delivers a “delightful...reflection on the past, present, and future of libraries in America” (New York magazine) that manages to tell the broader story of libraries and librarians in a way that has never been done before.

**No meeting in December**