



Rush Public Library
Rush Readers' Book Club Selections
2005-2018

1. ***Pride & Prejudice* by Jane Austen**, "A classic comedy of manners. What Melville did for whaling Austen does for marriage--tracing the intricacies (not to mention the economics) of 19th-century British mating rituals with a sure hand and an unblinking eye."
2. ***Servants of the Map* by Andrea Barrett**, "These wonderfully imagined stories and novellas travel the territories of yearning and awakening, of loss and unexpected discovery."
3. ***Buffalo Soldier* by Chris Bojalian**, "A suspenseful, moving portrait of a family infused by Bojalian's moral complexity and narrative assurance."
4. ***Kitchen Confidential: Adventures In the Culinary Underbelly* by Anthony Bourdain**, "New York Chef Tony Bourdain gives away secrets of the trade in his wickedly funny, inspiring memoir/expose. It reveals what Bourdain calls "twenty-five years of sex, drugs, bad behavior and haute cuisine."
5. ***The Mermaids Singing* by Lisa Carey**, "A lyrical and sensual first novel, weaving together the voices and lives of three generations of Irish and Irish-American women."
6. ***Death of an Ordinary Man* by Glen Duncan**, "A dead man hovers over his funeral, getting to know the living as he has never known them before. But where is his daughter, and who are the two strangers at the funeral?"
7. ***Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America* by Barbara Ehrenreich**, "A social critic goes "undercover" as an unskilled worker to reveal the dark side of American prosperity."
8. ***Like Water for Chocolate* by Laura Esquivel**, "A tall-tale, fairy-tale, soap opera romance, Mexican cookbook, and home-remedy handbook all rolled into one"
9. ***Madame Bovary* by Gustave Flaubert**, "The story of Emma Bovary's tragic choices and their consequences."
10. ***Cold Mountain: A Novel* by Charles Frazier**, "This is a tale of a wounded Civil War soldier, Inman, who walks away from the ravages of war and back home to his prewar sweetheart, Ada. As their lives begin to converge, they confront a vastly transformed world."
11. ***Seduction of Water* by Carol Goodman**, "This is a contemporary literary thriller utilizing mystery, folklore and a strong sense of place...an atmospheric page-turner about a woman seeking answers about her mother's death and a missing manuscript while spending the summer in the Catskills."

12. ***Seneca Falls Inheritance*** by **Miriam Grace Monfredo** a local author, “History and mystery are combined in a local setting with a likeable heroine that should appeal to both men and women.”
13. ***The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*** by **Mark Hadden**, “Christopher, a mathematically-gifted, autistic fifteen-year-old boy, decides to investigate the murder of a neighbor's dog and uncovers secret information about his mother.”
14. ***The Maltese Falcon*** by **Dashiell Hammett**, “Sam Spade, a private eye with his own solitary code of ethics, stars in Hammett's coolly-glittering gem of detective fiction, a novel that has haunted two generations of readers.”
15. ***The Great Fire*** by **Shirley Hazzard**, “The great fire of the Second World War has convulsed Europe and Asia. In its wake, Aldred Leith, an acclaimed hero of the conflict, has spent two years in China at work on account of world-transforming change there. It's a deeply-observed story of love and separation, of disillusion and recovered humanity.”
16. ***Blackbird House*** by **Alice Hoffman**, “An evocative work that traces the lives of the various occupants of an old Massachusetts house over a span of 200 years.”
17. ***The Kite Runner*** by **Khaled Hosseini**, “The unforgettable, heartbreaking story of an unlikely friendship between a wealthy boy and the son of his father's servant, this is a beautifully crafted novel set in a country (Afghanistan) that is in the process of being destroyed.”
18. ***A Prayer for Owen Meany*** by **John Irving** , “In the summer of 1953, two eleven-year-old boys—best friends—are playing in a baseball game in New Hampshire. One of the boys hits a foul ball that kills the other boy's mother. The boy who hits the ball doesn't believe in accidents; Owen Meany believes he is God's instrument. What happens to Owen, after that 1953 foul ball, is extraordinary and terrifying.
19. ***The Beekeeper's Apprentice*** by **Laurie R. King**, “Long retired, Sherlock Holmes quietly pursues his study of honeybee behavior on the Sussex Downs. He never imagines he would encounter anyone whose intellect matches his own, much less an audacious teenage girl with a penchant for detection.”
20. ***Freakonomics: A Rogue Economist Explores the Hidden Side of Everything*** by **Steven D. Levitt and Stephen J. Dubner**, “Through forceful storytelling and wry insight, Levitt and Dubner show that economics is, at its root, the study of incentives.”
21. ***Gift from the Sea*** by **Anne Morrow Lindbergh**, “In this 1955 best seller, Lindbergh discusses the challenges faced by women and offers inspiration. An answer to the conflicts in our lives.”
22. ***Shop Girl: A Novella*** by **Steve Martin**, “Mirabelle captures the attention of Ray Porter, a wealthy businessman almost twice her age. As they tentatively embark on a relationship, they both struggle to decipher the language of love -- with consequences that are both comic and heartbreaking.”

23. ***The No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency*** by **Alexander McCall Smith**, "Deftly interweaving tragedy and humor to create a memorable tale of human desires and foibles, this mystery novel is also an evocative portrait of a distant world."
24. ***The Sunday Philosophy Club*** by **Alexander McCall Smith**, "Murder and moral obligation mingle in this whimsical series starring the irrepressibly curious Isabel Dalhousie."
25. ***Salem Falls*** by **Jodi Piccoult**, "A legal thriller with tragedy, a love story and witchcraft."
26. ***The Shipping News*** by **Annie Proulx**, "A tale about a third-rate newspaperman and the women in his life — an elderly aunt and two young daughters — who undergo striking changes when they decide to resettle in their ancestral coastal home."
27. ***Wide Sargasso Sea*** by **Jean Rhys**, "A romantic and tragic novel of spellbinding intensity, beautiful in its background and an imaginative feat of the highest order."
28. ***The Plot Against America*** by **Philip Roth**, "In this stunning novel, Roth creates a mesmerizing alternate world, in which Charles Lindbergh defeats FDR in the 1940 presidential election, and a family weathers the storm in Newark, N.J... a historical setting for a fictional account of a Jewish family in America under the rule of a Nazi sympathizer."
29. ***Catcher in the Rye*** by **J. D. Salinger**, "Holden narrates the story of a couple of days in his sixteen-year-old life, just after he's been expelled from prep school, in a slang that sounds edgy even today and keeps this novel on banned book lists. His constant wry observations about what he encounters, from teachers to phonies (the two are not mutually exclusive) capture the essence of the eternal teenage experience of alienation."
30. ***All-True Travels and Adventures of Lidie Newton*** by **Jane Smiley**, "Presents a multifaceted picture of the developing American character, as shaped not only by such explosive issues as slavery but also by the difficulties of the frontier and the day-to-day relationships between men and women."
31. ***Name All the Animals*** by **Alison Smith**, "A luminous, true story, *Name All the Animals* is an unparalleled account of grief and secret love: the tale of a family clinging to the memory of a lost child, and a young woman struggling to define herself in the wake of this loss."
32. ***Ethan Frome*** by **Edith Wharton**, "Ethan works his unproductive farm, and struggles to maintain an existence with his suspicious and hypochondriac wife, Zeena; but when Zeena's cousin enters their household as a "hired girl", Ethan finds himself obsessed with her and with the possibilities for happiness she comes to represent."
33. ***Plainsong*** by **Kent Haruf**, "This saga of seven residents of Holt, Colorado, details the problems they face and how they come together to solve them. There is a keen sense of place here—a place where family and community matter."
34. ***Hope and Other Dangerous Pursuits*** by **Laila Lalami**. "This poetic debut begins with the illegal journey of four Moroccans across the Strait of Gibraltar. Moments away from the shores of Spain, the boat capsizes and the passengers are forced to swim for their lives and their freedom. What follows is an exploration of the pasts that led to this passage, and the futures that emerge from this voyage."

35. ***The March*** by **E.L. Doctorow**. “Almost hypnotic in its narrative drive, this novel stunningly renders the countless lives swept up in the violence of a country at war with itself. The great march in E. L. Doctorow’s hands becomes something more—a floating world, a nomadic consciousness, and an unforgettable reading experience with awesome relevance to our own times.”
36. ***Fahrenheit 451*** by **Ray Bradbury**. “In this classic, frightening vision of the future, firemen don't put out fires--they start them in order to burn books. Bradbury's vividly painted society holds up the appearance of happiness as the highest goal--a place where trivial information is good, and knowledge and ideas are bad.”
37. ***Three Junes*** by **Julia Glass**, “This author’s first work is a National Book Award winner and acclaimed as a “generous book about family expectations that bursts with the lives of the characters.”
38. ***The Luncheon of the Boating Party*** by **Susan Vreeland**, is described as “a highly recommended, profoundly moving portrait of the creative process. Vreeland turns to French impressionist master Auguste Renoir's famous painting which depicts a group of people in 1880 enjoying leisure time on the terrace of a riverside restaurant.”
39. ***Grayson*** by **Lynne Cox**, “A true story of a young woman’s mysterious encounter with a whale and how it changed her life. The combination of retelling her once-in-a-lifetime experience with her observations on life will have timeless appeal for all ages.”
40. ***Triangle*** by **Katherine Weber**, “The 1911 fire at the Triangle Shirtwaist Company in New York City killed almost 150 people. Weber blends that fact with an interesting and believable fictional premise in this haunting novel about Esther Gottesfeld, the oldest living survivor of the disaster. How did she survive while her fiancé and twin sister, Pauline, perished?”
41. ***The Shawl*** by **Cynthia Ozick**, “is the story of a woman who survived the Holocaust. *Publisher’s Weekly* calls it "a book that etches itself indelibly in the reader's mind.”
42. ***Garlic and Sapphires: The Secret Life of a Critic in Disguise*** by **Ruth Reichl** “The author focuses on her life as a food critic, dishing up a feast of fabulous meals enjoyed during her tenure at *The New York Times*. As a critic, Reichl was determined to review the "true" nature of each restaurant she visited, so she often dined incognito.”
43. ***The Diary of Mattie Spenser*** by **Sandra Dallas**, “This novel is a wonderfully vivid portrait of frontier life. It is a modest, appealing novel with a convincing reach into Colorado's plains and skies.”
44. ***Consumption*** by **Kevin Patterson** , “In language that is always sharp and sometimes mesmerizing, the author seamlessly works murder, sex and intrigue into the mix and offers a terrific cast that makes arctic life, and the ties of kin, palpable. He delivers a searingly visceral message about love, loss and dislocation.
45. ***Jim the Boy*** by **Tony Early**, “...a luminous portrait of a ten-year-old boy growing up in the Depression-era town of Aliceville, North Carolina. At once delightful and wise, it brilliantly captures the pleasures and fears of youth at a time when America itself was young.”

46. ***Chocolat*** by **Joanne Harris**, is “a novel that describes the transformations that overtake the residents of a small French village when a mysterious stranger and her daughter arrive and open a chocolate shop during Lent.”
47. ***The Sun Also Rises*** by **Ernest Hemmingway**, a novel set in Paris and Spain in the 1920’s. It depicts the lives of a group of young American and English expatriates living in the aftermath of World War I. It’s considered to be one of the “top 100 books that you must read in your lifetime”.
48. ***The Girl with No Shadow*** by **Joanne Harris** (the sequel to *Chocolat*.) *Publisher’s Weekly* says: “Harris gives fans much to savor in this multilayered novel, from the descriptions of confections to the novel’s classic theme of good vs. evil—and the difficulty of telling the difference.”
49. ***In a Sunburned Country*** by **Bill Bryson**, a book about his exploits in Australia “Peppered with seemingly irrelevant (albeit amusing) yarns, this work is a delight to read.”
50. ***Year of Wonders: A Novel of the Plague*** by Pulitzer-winner **Geraldine Brooks**. “Exploring love, fear, fanaticism, and the struggle of science and religion to interpret the world, this gripping historical novel is based on the true story of Eyam, the ‘Plague Village,’ tucked in the rugged mountains of England.”
51. ***A Separate Peace*** by **John Knowles**, “Gene Forrester’s quiet life is changed forever in the summer of 1942 when he becomes friends with his new daredevil roommate, Finny. Each character is seeking to establish, yet uncomfortable with, identity.”
52. ***Nevermore: Prose and Poems*** written by **Edgar Allen Poe**. “They all succeed in capturing Poe’s macabre blend of doomed romanticism, gothic melodrama, and ghoulish destiny.”
53. ***Water for Elephants*** by **Sara Gruen**. Described as “...lively with historical detail and unexpected turns, it is a rich surprise springing from a fascinating footnote to history.... It is the story of Jacob’s life with the Benzini Brothers Circus. The book is partially based on real circus stories and illustrated with historical circus photographs.”
54. ***The Call of the Wild*** by **Jack London**. “This is regarded as Jack London’s masterpiece. Based on his experiences as a gold prospector in the Canadian wilderness and his ideas about nature and the struggle for existence, this is a tale about unbreakable spirit and the fight for survival in the frozen Alaskan Klondike.”
55. ***The Glass Castle, a Memoir*** by **Jeanette Walls**. “Jeanette Walls grew up with parents whose ideals were both their curse and their salvation.” Her mother was a painter & writer who couldn’t stand the responsibility of providing for her family, and her father drank and disappeared for days. Jeanette and her siblings learned to fend for themselves and hers is a story of triumph above all odds!”
56. ***Bel Canto*** by **Ann Patchett**, “Joined by no common language except music, 58 international hostages and their captors forge unexpected bonds. Time stands still, priorities rearrange themselves. Ultimately, of course, something has to give, even in a novel so imbued with the rich imaginative potential of magic realism. But in a fractious world, *Bel Canto* remains a gentle reminder of the transcendence of beauty and love.”

57. ***The Shadow Catcher*** by **Marianne Wiggins**, “It dramatically inhabits the space where past and present intersect, seamlessly interweaving narratives from two different eras: the first fraught passion between turn-of-the-twentieth-century icon Edward Curtis (1868-1952) and his muse-wife, Clara; and a twenty-first-century journey of redemption.”
58. ***Our Town: A Play in Three Acts*** by **Thornton Wilder**, First published in 1938, this Pulitzer Prize-winning drama of life in the small village of Grover’s Corners has become an American classic. “Mr. Wilder has transmuted the simple events of a small town in 1901 into a universal reverie.”
59. ***Prodigal Summer*** by **Barbara Kingsolver**, “A corner of southern Appalachia serves as the setting for the stories of three intertwined lives... tied intimately to the natural world and engaged in an elemental search for dignity and human connection.”
60. ***The Lobster Chronicles*** by **Linda Greenlaw**, In this true story the “honest, funny, scrappy and authentic” Greenlaw decides to take a break from being a sword boat captain to become a professional lobsterman, and then hopes to settle down to a normal life; but all does not go according to plan....
61. ***Enemy Women*** by poet **Paulette Jiles**. “For Adair Randolph Colley, at 18 the eldest daughter of a widowed Missouri Ozarks justice of the peace, the Civil War becomes personal when her father, who has remained neutral in the conflict, is arrested by the Union militia, their home is nearly burned and their possessions stolen. Described as an outstanding first novel, it leads us into new terrain, both geographic and historical, in the War Between the States.”
62. ***Snow Flower and the Secret Fan*** by **Lisa See**, “A language kept secret for thousands of years forms the backdrop for an unforgettable novel of two Chinese women whose friendship and love sustain them through their lives.”
63. ***The Zookeeper’s Wife*** by **Diane Ackerman**. *Booklist* magazine calls it “an exemplary work of scholarship and an ecstasy of imagining.” It tells the remarkable WWII story of Jan Zabinski, the director of the Warsaw Zoo, and his wife, Antonina, who, with courage and coolheaded ingenuity, sheltered 300 Jews as well as Polish resisters in their villa and in animal cages and sheds.
64. ***A Yellow Raft in Blue Water*** by **Michael Dorris**. This is a cross-generational story of three Native American women in Montana who must come to grips with the past. “The bitter rifts and inevitable bonds between generations are highlighted as the story unravels and spills out a long-kept family secret.”
65. ***The Known World***, by **Edward P. Jones**. “It’s a story of antebellum Virginia, where freed slave Henry Townsend has a plantation- and slaves of his own. This is a profoundly beautiful and insightful look at American slavery and human nature.” This novel was a National Book Award finalist.
66. ***The Good Thief***, by **Hannah Tinti**, described by the *New York Times* as “an American Dickensian tale with touches of Harry Potterish whimsy, along with a macabre streak of spooky New England history.”

- 67. *Can't Wait to get to Heaven*, by Fannie Flagg.** "Combining southern warmth with unabashed emotion and side-splitting hilarity, Fannie Flagg takes readers back to Elmwood Springs, Missouri, where the most unlikely and surprising experiences of a high-spirited octogenarian inspire a town to ponder the age-old question: Why are we here?"
- 68. *The Namesake*** by Pulitzer Prize Winner, **Jhumpa Lahiri**. This novel details the hardship of a husband and wife, who leave their home in Calcutta, India and settle in Massachusetts. Through a series of errors, their son's nickname, Gogol, becomes his official birth name, an event which will shape many aspects of his life.
- 69. *The Book of Air and Shadows*** by **Michael Gruber**. It's described as a "literary thriller in which seventeenth-century letters found in a rare book trigger a race to find an undiscovered Shakespeare play... with finely-honed prose, ambitious structure and captivating characters."
- 70. *The Razor's Edge*** by **W. Somerset Maugham**. American pilot, Larry Darnell, traumatized by his experiences in World War I, sets off to India in search of transcendent meaning in his life, and then returns to Chicago and finally Paris. His rejection of conventional life allows him to thrive while others suffer reversals of fortune. Maugham characterizes this story as a thinly-veiled true account of himself.
- 71. *Olive Kitteridge*** by **Elizabeth Strout**. "Olive, a retired schoolteacher, deplors the changes in her little town and in the world at large. As the townspeople grapple with their problems, Olive is brought to a deeper understanding of herself and her life, and offers us profound insights into the human condition." Winner of the 2009 Pulitzer Prize.
- 72. *Let the Great World Spin*** by **Colum McCann**. "In the dawning light of morning, the people of lower Manhattan stand hushed, staring up at the Twin Towers. It is August 1974, and a mysterious tightrope walker is running, dancing, and leaping between the towers.... In the streets below, a slew of ordinary lives become extraordinary in a stunningly intricate portrait of a city and its people." Winner of the National Book Award.
- 73. *The Last Days of Dogtown*** by **Anita Diamant**, author of *The Red Tent*. Set in the early 1800's in rural Massachusetts, Ms. Diamant imagines the lives of people who have been left out of history: the poor, widows and spinsters, orphans, and New England Africans. These fascinating folks bring together an entire world of longing, loss, laughter and hope.
- 74. *Lake of Dreams*** by **Kim Edwards**. "Set in the beautiful Finger Lakes area, this novel is the story of Lucy Jarrett and her discovery of a hidden past, glimpsed first through fragments of old letters and traces left in stained glass windows. With surprises at every turn, this is a saga in which every element emerges as a carefully placed piece of the puzzle."
- 75. *The Piano Lesson*** by **August Wilson**. Celebrate Black History Month with Mr. Wilson, a Pulitzer Prize winner, Broadway playwright, and founder of the Black Horizon on the Hill Theatre Company. *The Piano Lesson* concerns the struggle of two siblings over a precious family heirloom, a piano carved with the images of their enslaved African ancestors, and asks the question, "What do you do with your legacy and how do you best put it to use?"
- 76. *The Madonnas of Leningrad*** by **Debra Dean**. "Her granddaughter's wedding should be a time of happiness for Marina Buriakov. But the Russian emigre's descent into Alzheimer's has her and her family experiencing more anxiety than joy. As the details of her present-day life slip

mysteriously away, Marina's recollections of her early years as a docent at the State Hermitage Museum become increasingly vivid. Gracefully shifting between the Soviet Union and the contemporary Pacific Northwest, first-time novelist Dean renders a poignant tale about the power of memory.”

77. ***Mudbound*** by Bellwether Prize-winner **Hillary Jordan**. It’s described as “a gripping and exquisitely-rendered story of forbidden love, betrayal, and murder, set against the brutality of the Jim Crow South. It is 1946 in the Mississippi Delta, where Memphis-bred Laura McAllan is struggling to adjust to farm life, rear her daughters with a modicum of manners and gentility, and be the wife her land-loving husband, Henry, wants her to be. It is an uphill battle every day.”
78. ***Major Pettigrew’s Last Stand*** by **Helen Simonson**. In this charming debut novel, Simonson tells the tale of Maj. Pettigrew, an honorable Englishman whose friendship with a widowed Pakistani shopkeeper takes an unexpected turn, which “wraps around the reader like a comforting cloak.”
79. ***The Devil in the White City*** by **Erik Larson**. Combining meticulous research with nail-biting storytelling, Larson brings Chicago circa 1893 to vivid life. This spellbinding non-fiction bestseller intertwines the true tale of two men--a brilliant World Fair architect and a serial killer. Aren’t you intrigued?
80. ***The Language of Flowers*** by **Vanessa Diffenbaugh**. The Victorians used flowers to convey romantic expressions. In this mesmerizing debut novel, the author beautifully weaves the past & present, creating a vivid portrait of an unforgettable woman whose love for flowers helps her change the lives of others as she struggles to overcome her troubled past.
81. ***The Great Gatsby*** by **F. Scott Fitzgerald**. “It’s the story of the fabulously wealthy Jay Gatsby and his love for the beautiful Daisy Buchanan, of lavish parties on Long Island at a time when gin was the national drink and sex the national obsession. It is an exquisitely crafted tale of America in the 1920s, a portrait of the Jazz Age in all of its decadence and excess; this novel captures the spirit of the author's generation and earns itself a permanent place in American mythology.”
82. ***The Physick Book of Deliverance Dane*** by **Katherine Howe**. It’s described as “... a spellbinding, witty, and astutely-plotted historical mystery, deeply rooted in the author’s family connection to accused 17th century witches Elizabeth Howe and Elizabeth Proctor....”
83. ***How the Garcia Girls Lost their Accents*** by **Julia Alvarez**. Selected as one of the “Best Books” by Library Journal, this is the story of four sisters, uprooted from their home in the Dominican Republic and who arrive in New York City in 1960. “What they have lost and what they find is revealed in fifteen, beautifully-told interconnected stories that vividly evoke the tensions and joys of belonging to two different cultures.”
84. ***Howards End*** by **E.M. Forster**. “The disregard of a dying woman’s bequest, a girl’s attempt to help an impoverished clerk, and the marriage of an idealist and a materialist all intersect at an estate called Howards End in the post-Victorian era.”
85. ***Parrot and Olivier in America*** by **Peter Carey**. A National Book Award Finalist. “An odd couple’s stark differences in class, background, outlook and attitude are an ingenious conceit for presenting the unique social experiment that was democracy in the early years of America.”

- 86. *Into the Beautiful North* by Luis Alberto Urrea.** “Nineteen-year-old Nayeli works at a taco shop in her Mexican village and dreams about her father, who journeyed to the US when she was young. Recently, it has dawned on her that he isn't the only man who has left town. In fact, there are almost no men in the village--they've all gone north. ... this novel is the story of a young woman's quest to find herself on both sides of the fence.”
- 87. *The Tender Bar* by J.R. Moehringer,** “...a memoir about coming of age in, of all unlikely places, a great American bar. Everyone in it is incredibly alive, everyone shines, and every vice is transformed into something glorious”.
- 88. *House of Velvet and Glass* by Katherine Howe.** “From the opium dens of Boston’s Chinatown to the opulent salons of high society, from the back alleys of colonial Shanghai to the decks of the Titanic, Howe weaves together meticulous period detail and a final shocking twist in a breathtaking novel that will thrill readers.”
- 89. *The Housekeeper and the Professor* by Yoko Ogawa.** “He is a math professor with a peculiar problem: only 80 minutes of short-term memory. She is an astute young housekeeper, hired to care for him. Every morning as they are re-introduced to each other anew, a strange and beautiful relationship blossoms between them.”
- 90. *The Camel Bookmobile* by Masha Hamilton.** “Inspired by a true story, Hamilton’s captivating novel weaves memorable characters in artful prose, and displays a heartfelt appreciation for the potential of literature to transcend cultural divides.”
- 91. *True Sisters* by Sandra Dallas.** “In 1856 Mormon converts encouraged by Brigham Young, and outfitted with two-wheeled handcarts, set out on foot for Salt Lake City- the Promised Land. This novel tells the story of four women whose lives became inextricably linked as they endured unimaginable hardships and learned the true meaning of friendship.
- 92. *A Walk in the Woods: Rediscovering America on the Appalachian Trail* by Bill Bryson.** *The Washington Post* describes this book as “A terribly misguided and terribly funny tale of adventure.”
- 93. *The Education of Little Tree* by Forrest Carter.** This story is an inspirational memoir of a young Cherokee Indian boy growing up in the 1930s. “Some of it’s sad, some of it hilarious, some of it unbelievable, and all of it charming.”
- 94. *Dubliners*, by James Joyce,** a classic book of short stories published 100 years ago. “The stories peer into the homes, hearts, and minds of people whose lives connect and intermingle through the shared space and spirit of Dublin.” This book was published the same year the Rush Public Library was founded- we are reading it as part of our Centennial Year Celebration!
- 95. *The Snow Child* by Eowyn Ivy.** It’s a folktale in which a child is brought to life from a figure made of snow...an exquisite tale of love and transformation set in the harsh beauty of 1920s Alaska.
- 96. *Remarkable Creatures* by Tracy Chevalier,** “...an historical novel in which the author turns the spotlight on a friendship cemented by shared obsession and mutual respect.”

- 97. *Summer in a Glass*** by local author, **Evan Dawson**. *Library Journal* says, "New York's Finger Lakes are home to the country's fastest-growing wine region, and each year millions of tourists spill into the tasting rooms of its wineries. Dawson brings this burgeoning area to life and captures its exciting diversity--from its immigrant German winemakers to its young, technically trained connoisseurs.... He composes a reminder of what makes wine so alluring. A fast, engaging read for wine lovers."
- 98. *The Chaperone*** by **Laura Moriarty**. With her shiny black bob and milky skin, Louise Brooks epitomized silent-film glamour. But in this novel, Brooks is just a precocious and bratty 15-year-old, and our protagonist, 36-year-old Cora Carlisle, has the uneasy mission of keeping the teenager virtuous while on a trip from their native Kansas to New York City. After a battle of wills, there's a sudden change of destiny for both women, with surprising and poignant results.
- 99. *The Storyteller*** by **Jodi Picoult**, "Mourning the passing of her mother, Sage Singer decides to attend a grief support group. She doesn't expect to start an unlikely friendship with an elderly man also attending. Josef Weber is a beloved, retired teacher and Little League coach. Together they attempt to heal. But one day he asks Sage for a favor: to kill him. Shocked, Sage refuses but then he confesses his darkest and long-buried secret, one that irrevocably changes Sage's worldview. She suddenly finds herself facing questions she never expected, such as what do you do when evil lives next door?"
- 100. *Under the Tuscan Sun- at Home in Italy*** by Frances Mayes, widely-published poet, gourmet cook, and travel writer. Ms. Mayes opens the door to a wondrous new world when she buys and restores an abandoned villa in the spectacular Tuscan countryside. Included in the story are dozens of seasonal recipes from her simple garden. This biography is a celebration of life in Tuscany and a feast for all the senses.
- 101. *The Age of Miracles*** by **Karen Thompson Walker**. "On an ordinary Saturday, Julia awakes to discover that something has happened to the rotation of the earth". Days and nights are changed, gravity is affected, and birds, tides and human behavior are thrown into disarray. With the magic of a storyteller, Ms. Walker gives us "a breathtaking portrait of people finding ways to go on in an ever-evolving world.
- 102. *The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry*** by **Rachel Joyce**. "Harold Fry, recently retired, lives in a small English village with his wife, Maureen, who seems irritated by almost everything he does. Then one morning a letter arrives, addressed to Harold in a shaky scrawl, from a woman he hasn't heard from in twenty years. Queenie Hennessy is in hospice and is writing to say goodbye. A chance encounter convinces him that he absolutely must deliver his message to Queenie in person. Determined to walk six hundred miles to the hospice, Harold believes that as long as he walks, Queenie will live. A novel of charm, humor, and profound insight into the thoughts and feelings we all bury deep within our hearts."
- 103. *Mr. Churchill's Secretary*** by **Susan Elia MacNeal**. "Wartime England in 1940 is the perfect backdrop for a courageous young woman who outwits the enemy in this debut mystery novel. The heroine, Maggie Hope, a London-born American with a degree in mathematics, is caught up in London when WWII starts in earnest. She's living in a seedy Victorian house with several other girls who are trying to cope with rationing and air-raids, when she begins working at No 10 Downing Street as one of Churchill's secretaries. This is for fans of *Bletchley Circle* or *The Imitation Game* movies."

- 104. *The Paris Wife* by Paula McLain.** “Chicago, 1920- Hadley Richardson meets Ernest Hemingway and her life changes forever. Following a whirlwind courtship they become the golden couple in the fabled “Lost Generation” that included Gertrude Stein, Ezra Pound and F. Scott Fitzgerald.” An evocative story of the ambition and betrayal of two remarkable people!
- 105. *Cooked: A Natural History of Transformation* by food writer Michael Pollan.** *The Boston Globe* says, “In Pollan’s dexterous hands, we get the science of cooking, the history, the inspiration, and ultimately the recipe. It doesn’t hurt that he also happens to be very funny.”
- 106. *The Sandcastle Girls* by Chris Bohjalian.** “WWI is spreading across Europe when Elizabeth Endicott arrives in Syria after a crash course in nursing, and with a very basic grasp of the Armenian language. It’s there that she meets a young Armenian widower. Flash forward to the present and meet novelist Laura Petrosain, who has never given her Armenian heritage much thought until she discovers a wrenching secret buried for generations.”
- 107. *Transatlantic* by Colum McCann.** “Three iconic crossings are connected by a series of remarkable women whose personal stories are caught up in the swells of history.... From the loughs of Ireland to the flatlands of Missouri and the windswept coast of Newfoundland, their journeys mirror the progress and shape of history.”
- 108. *Emma* by Jane Austen.** “An English heiress busies herself with finding a suitable husband for her friend, setting off an entertaining sequence of comic mishaps and misunderstanding in this sparkling comedy of English-village romance. Beneath its considerable wit, the novel is also the story of a young woman’s progress toward self-understanding.”
- 109. *A Constellation of Vital Phenomena* by Anthony Marra.** (It was at the top of twenty must-read lists in 2012!) “An authentic, heartbreaking tale of intertwining relationships during wartime.... As he shifts in time through the years of the two Chechen wars, Marra confidently weaves those plots together, and several more besides, giving each character a rich backstory that intersects, often years down the line, with the others.”
- 110. *Queen of the Fall; A Memoir of Girls and Goddesses* by Sonja Livingston.** “Whether pulled from the folds of memory, or channeled through the icons of Greek mythology and Roman Catholicism, or filtered through the lens of pop-culture, this novel considers the lives of women with imagined vignettes in the late 1980s and early 1990s America.”
- 111. *The Time Keeper* by Mitch Albom.** In this work of fiction, the inventor of the first clock is banished by God to a cave for trying to measure time and is forced to listen to the voices of all who desire more days and years. Finally, Father Time is granted his freedom and returns to the world and begins a journey with two unlikely partners, one who has given up on life, another who wants to live forever. To save himself, he must save them both- a tale that will inspire readers to reconsider their own notions of time.
- 112. *Where’d You Go, Bernadette?* by Maria Semple.** “There’s a lot to like in Semple’s charming family dramedy, including vivacious humor and a compassionate look at family dysfunction, the paralysis of genius, and good old-fashioned parental love... cleverly constructed and brilliantly executed.”

- 113. *The Miniaturist* by Jessie Burton.** “In 1686, eighteen-year-old Nella Oortman arrives in Amsterdam to begin a new life as the wife of an illustrious merchant trader. Her new home is splendid, but not welcoming. Her life changes when her husband presents her with an extraordinary gift: a cabinet-sized replica of their home. Jessie enlists the services of a miniaturist to furnish her gift, but the tiny creations mirror their real life-counterparts in eerie and unexpected ways.”
- 114. *The House Girl* by Tara Conklin.** “Weaving together the story of an escaped slave in the pre–Civil War South and a determined junior lawyer, the novel follows Lina Sparrow as she looks for an appropriate lead plaintiff in a lawsuit seeking compensation for families of slaves. In her research, she learns about Lu Anne Bell, a renowned prewar artist whose famous works might have actually been painted by her slave, Josephine. Featuring two remarkable, unforgettable heroines, Tara Conklin's *The House Girl* is riveting and powerful, literary fiction at its very best.”
- 115. *A Mount Vernon Love Story: A Novel of George and Martha Washington* by Mary Higgins Clark.** In researching George Washington's life, Ms. Clark was surprised to find the engaging man behind the pious legend. Washington married the widow Martha Dandridge Custis, and Clark describes their relationship from their first meeting, their closeness, and his tenderness toward her children. This is the story of a rare marriage that brings to life the human side of the man who became the “father of our country”
- 116. *Behind the Beautiful Forevers: Life, Death, and Hope in a Mumbai Undercity* by journalist and MacArthur grant-winner Katherine Boo** is inspiring and irresistible. “Boo’s extraordinary achievement is twofold. She shows us how people in the most desperate circumstances can find the resilience to hang on to their humanity. Just as important, she makes us care.” This month’s selection won the Nation Book Award.
- 117. *Rebecca* by Daphne du Maurier,** an international best seller that has never gone out of print. “Working as a lady’s companion, Rebecca’s future looks bleak until she meets Max De Winter, whose sudden proposal of marriage takes her by surprise. She soon finds her husband a changed man when he takes her to his ominous estate at Manderley, where the memory of his dead wife is kept alive by a forbidding housekeeper, Mrs. Danvers.”
- 118. *O Pioneers!* by Willa Cather.** “This novel tells the story of the Bergsons, a family of Swedish pioneers that settles for life in the American prairie. While Alexandra, the family matriarch, is able to turn the family farm into a financial success, her brother Emil must grapple with the tragedy of solace and forbidden love. A novel surprisingly ahead of its time, it touches upon a wide range of themes, including love, marriage, temptation, and isolation.”
- 119. *The Enchanted* by Rene Denfeld.** “The narrator is locked inside an ancient prison, waiting for death. Guilt and innocence collide in this story of the beauty that can exist in the midst of despair, and of the human capacity to transcend even the most nightmarish reality.”
- 120. *Delicious!* by former *Gourmet Magazine* editor-in-chief, Ruth Reichl.** “Vivid descriptions of food will have readers salivating, and an insider’s look at life at a food magazine is fascinating. Her satisfying coming-of-age novel of love and loss vividly demonstrates the power of food to connect people across cultures and generations.”

- 121. *A Northern Light* by Jennifer Donnelly.** “Set in the Adirondacks in 1906 against the backdrop of the murder that inspired the true story, *An American Tragedy*, Ms. Donnelly’s astonishing debut novel effortlessly weaves romance, history, and a murder mystery into something moving, real, and totally original.”
- 122. *The Good Lord Bird* by James McBride.** NPR says, “You may know the story of John Brown's unsuccessful raid on Harpers Ferry, but author McBride's retelling of the events leading up to it is so imaginative, you'll race to the finish." This novel was the 2013 National Book Award winner- find out why.
- 123. *The Round House*, by Louise Erdrich,** 2012 National Book Award Winner. “This novel transports readers to the Ojibwe reservation in North Dakota; it’s an exquisitely told story of a boy on the cusp of manhood who seeks justice and understanding in the wake of a terrible crime that upends and forever transforms his family.”
- 124. *Little Bee* by Chris Cleave.** This is the story of two women and how their lives collide one fateful day, when one of them has to make a terrible choice. Two years later they meet again and the magic is how the story unfolds.
- 125. *Northanger Abby* by Jane Austen,** published after her death in late December, 1817. It is a satire on the Gothic novels that were popular in the late 1700s. The main character, Catherine, entertains us as she gains experiences and discovers that she is not like other women who crave wealth or social acceptance.
- 126. *The Distance Between Us* by Reyna Grande.** The author vividly brings to life her tumultuous early years when her parents made the dangerous trek across the Mexican border in pursuit of the American dream.
- 127. *Ordinary Grace* by William Kent Krueger,** “a coming-of-age novel that documents the strength of a father, the depth of friendship and the horrors of misfortune while capturing small town life and the profound and enduring bonds of sibling love.”
- 128. *Wuthering Heights* by Emily Bronte.** The author’s only novel endures as an English literature’s classic masterpiece- a gripping novel of love, propriety and tragedy. Set on the bleak Yorkshire moors, we meet the gypsy foundling Heathcliff, and learn of the tempestuous events that turn him into a tortured romantic hero and of his intense love for the well-bred Catherine Earnshaw.
- 129. *The Whole Town’s Talking*, by Fannie Flagg.** “Elmwood Springs is a small town like any other, but something strange is happening at the cemetery. Still Meadows, as it’s called, is anything but still.” In the tradition of Thornton Wilder’s *Our Town*, this is the story of a Swedish couple, their neighbors and descendants as they live, love, die, and carry on in mysterious ways!
- 130. *The Joy Luck Club*, by Amy Tan.** In 1949 four Chinese women, recent immigrants to San Francisco, begin meeting to eat dim sum, play mahjong, and talk. With wit and sensitivity, Amy Tan examines the sometimes painful, often tender, and always deep connection between mothers and daughters. As each woman reveals her secrets, trying to unravel the truth about her life, the strings become more tangled, more entwined.