



THE BOOK STALL

December 2021/January 2022

Vol. XXXII, No. 10

Nancy Dreher, *Editor*



THE FRONT LINE



The store has been bustling with holiday shoppers—a sharp contrast to our Covid operations this time last year! We've done our very best to anticipate the popular books of the season but, like every retailer, we are struggling with supply chain issues, as many books are printed overseas, especially those beautiful gift books we love at the holidays. Still, we're confident that we can help you find the perfect gift. And check out our website for online ordering!

We've combined December and January in this newsletter, so in these pages you'll find Book Stall booksellers choosing their favorite book of last year, and you'll also find our list of "New Year New You" titles. Traditional lists include books about diet and organization, but we'll continue our (new) tradition of suggesting more aspirational books for the new year. You'll find titles about protecting the environment, cooking, the meaning of freedom, a framework on ending bias, and the importance of human connection. Know that the wonder of a bookstore is that we have something for every goal or hope you may have for 2022!

There are some wonderful books to read while enjoying the holiday season. Many booksellers here have loved Claire Keegan's *Small Things Like These*. Set during the weeks leading up to Christmas, Keegan is writing about the notorious Magdalene laundries where young pregnant girls were sent. In the end, it's a story about hope and bravery, perfect themes for the season. For the mystery lover, we have Agatha Christie's *Hercule Poirot's Christmas* and *When Christmas Comes* by Andrew Klavan, a small-town mystery lauded by Stephen King. Who doesn't love a little murder to balance the holiday cheer?! For something a bit lighter, pick up the charming *The Matzah Ball* by Jean Meltzer about a nice Jewish girl who hides the fact that she writes Christmas romance novels, but is then told by her publisher that she must write a Hanukkah romance.

I recently finished *The Sentence* by Louise Erdrich about a bookstore in Minneapolis (where Erdrich herself has a bookstore!), haunted by its most annoying customer. More than a ghost story, *The Sentence* actually touches on so much more: the pandemic and the racial violence we all witnessed in 2020. I loved it and will be giving copies to friends! Thrity Umrigar, who wrote *The Space Between Us*, one of my favorite books, has penned a new book called *Honor* (out January 4) about the deep religious divisions in contemporary India. I'm so excited to get a copy!

We end this year optimistic about the next. The Book Stall has continued to evolve and change as we strive to serve our reading community. This fall, we had book fairs for eight schools—a record for us! Manager Mike Wysock, Children's Buyer Kari Patch, and Children's bookseller Betsy Balyeat did an amazing job coordinating and executing these hybrid events. And we're looking forward to a spring season of bookfairs—give us a call if your school or organization might be interested (20% of sales associated with the fair are donated). Although we were unable to accommodate in-person story times and activities as we have in years past, parents and kids still loved all the books and curated lists for teachers and young readers alike.

The Family Action Network seemed only to gain momentum even as Covid slowed so much down. A dynamic roster of speakers, including Questlove and Billy Porter, has propelled this fine organization onto a national stage. (See inside for their December lineup.) We feel truly honored to work with them! We are also grateful to our incredibly erudite book group leaders, who gamely navigated Zoom to guide discussion on some wonderful titles. Finally, we bid a sad farewell to Kathie Berquist, our social media coordinator, who made our Facebook, Twitter and Instagram vibrant and interesting!

We continue to be grateful for your support! Happy New Year!

Steph

All events require registration. Please go to www.thebookstall.com, click on "Events," and scroll down to "December" or "January." Click on the date of the event and follow directions for reserving your space.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 1

7 pm, Virtual Wilmette Public Library "Meet the Author" Program

OMAR EL AKKAD

What Strange Paradise
Mr. El Akkad's novel just won Canada's Scotiabank Giller Prize that celebrates excellence in Canadian fiction—and now it is on the longlist for the 2022 Aspen Words Literary Prize. *What Strange Paradise* looks at the global refugee crisis through the eyes of a child. Mr. El Akkad was born in Egypt, grew up in Qatar, moved to Canada as a teenager, and now lives in Portland, Oregon. Mr. El Akkad will be joined in conversation by Jack Doppelt, the Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani Emeritus Professor of Journalism at Northwestern's Medill School of Journalism.



SATURDAY AND SUNDAY, DECEMBER 4 and 5

Please join us for our annual 20% percent off sale!
On Saturday, December 4, we are open from 9 am - 6 pm. On Sunday, December 5, from 9 am - 5 pm
See our website for details.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 5

2 pm, A Virtual Event

ROBIN PREISS GLASSER

Grand Jeté and Me

The Book Stall presents a special online program with illustrator Robin Preiss Glasser (right)



and Salt Creek Ballet Artistic Director Erica De La O (left), who will discuss Robin's new picture book *Grand Jeté and Me*, as well as the Salt Creek Ballet's production of *The Nutcracker*. They'll also chat about how to create and foster a career in the arts. In the book, written by former prima ballerina Allegra Kent and illustrated by Fancy Nancy illustrator Glasser, a young girl and her grandmother embark on a holiday adventure to see *The Nutcracker* together! Grandmother, known as "Grand Jeté," was once a prima ballerina who danced in *The Nutcracker* herself, and now she's sharing the magic of this special ballet. Each copy of *Grand Jeté and Me* purchased from The Book Stall will contain a bookplate signed by the illustrator, while supplies last! For more information, click on our website calendar. We recommend this free program for ages 7 and up.

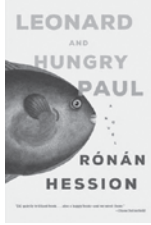
Calendar continues on page 6

Book Stall Staffers Pick Their 2021 Favorites

STEPHANIE HOCHSCHILD



One of the tragedies of Covid is that many books never made it into readers' hands, especially those by first-time authors who lack the name recognition of more established writers. *Leonard and Hungry Paul*, Irish musician Ronan Hession's debut novel (\$17.99 in paperback), was one such book that I missed in hardcover, but am so grateful that our Random House rep recommended it to me in paperback. It is generous, kind, thoughtful, delightful. It is a celebration of the ordinary moments in life, of friendship and family. Leonard and Paul are single young men in their early 20s who enjoy board games and conversation. They are not strivers, seeking to advance themselves in career or society; they are both quite comfortable in their own skins. Leonard's adored mother has recently died, and he is especially grateful for the friendship of Hungry Paul (we never do learn the significance of that name) and Hungry Paul's kind family, who is in the process of planning the wedding of their daughter. But even in their quiet lives, things are beginning to change. Leonard meets a woman at work and begins to seek her company. Hungry Paul enters a contest, and, to his surprise, he wins. Both men remain true to themselves as they explore life's possibilities. This book made me smile and even laugh when the world seemed especially dark.



AIMEE ANDERSON



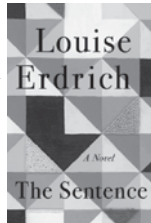
The Evening and the Morning by Ken Follett (\$20 in paperback). Fans of Ken Follett and historical fiction in general will enjoy this sweeping saga set in England at the dawn of the Middle Ages. The book is written as a prequel to *Pillars of the Earth*, the first book in the Kingsbridge series, but readers do not need to be familiar with Follett's earlier works to appreciate this story. The saga intertwines three stories: a young boatbuilder, whose life is upturned by a Viking raid on his homeland, killing his family and the woman he loves; a noblewoman, who marries and must move to a foreign land, forcing her to learn new traditions and adapt to different ways of life; and a monk with lofty ambitions to create the premier learning center in Europe. Rich with history and emotion, Follett captured my attention from the beginning, and I quickly became engrossed in the story and its characters. As with his previous trilogies, even though they are each 800+ pages, I couldn't wait for the next book because I truly became invested in their stories. I particularly enjoyed many of the common themes that run through his books: ambition, competition, the struggle for power, determination, love, and perseverance.



KATHLEEN CRAWFORD



The Sentence by Louise Erdrich (\$28.99). Pulitzer Prize-winning author Erdrich's latest novel is set in a Minneapolis independent bookstore that focuses on Native American literature and the Native community in the Twin Cities. The story takes place from November



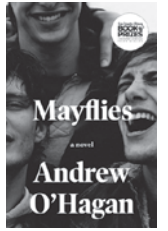
2019 and ends in November 2020, during which time the shop is haunted by an annoying customer who has recently died. Toookie, a middle-aged Ojibwe woman, has landed a job selling books after seven years of incarceration, in which she survived by reading with "murderous attention." Toookie attempts to solve the mysterious haunting, even as she and her family work to survive one of the most agonizing and harrowing

years in the city's history. This novel has wonderfully wry humor: "Small bookstores have the romance of doomed intimate spaces about to be erased by unfettered capitalism," but is also heart-wrenching, sorrowful, and quite profound. Erdrich is widely acclaimed as one of the most significant writers on Native American topics and should be considered one of the finest writers in our country's history. It is because of Erdrich's exquisite writing, and the uniqueness of this haunting novel about a haunted year, that I chose *The Sentence* as my favorite book of 2021.

CHRISTINE FERDINAND



Mayflies by Andrew O'Hagan (\$22.95). Acclaimed in the UK, O'Hagan's Scottish tale is both witty and heartbreaking. *Mayflies* tells the story of male friendship and camaraderie, based on a shared love of '80s post-punk music (The Fall, New Order, and The Smiths), films,



and rebel spirit. It's the summer of 1986, and the gang of men bond when they travel to Manchester for a weekend music festival. In the glow of youth and possibility, they vow to live their lives differently from their unhappy working class fathers. The second half of the novel takes us to 2017, when we revisit the men as they are reunited, now in middle age. While each man's character is essentially the same, life circumstances have changed. The ties that bind them are strong, but difficult decisions must be made. We follow the friends as they are forced to confront love, death, and reconcile with what their lives have become. O'Hagan's endearing narrative surely entertains, but also leads readers to reflect on how their own lives are living up to the expectations of their younger selves. *Mayflies* is a timeless story, with characters that have stayed with me since I read it earlier this year.

KARA GAGLIARDI



The Paper Palace by Miranda Cowley Heller (\$27). This was one of my favorite books this year. Why? It surprised me. 2021 was the year of the beach read. *Paper Palace* stood out because it was shocking, layered, and more than mere summer entertainment. The



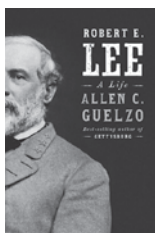
book opens with Elle Bishop going out for a swim. (Her mother has told her there are two things in life you never regret, a baby and a swim.) It is Cape Cod, a pond near an ocean, skirting the edge of a set of decaying cabins—a "paper palace" for the wealthy. Generations of families gather. This morning is different, because the night before, as her mother did dishes, her husband drank grappa, and the kids slept, Elle had a sexual encounter with her childhood friend, Jonas. Wow. Journey back 50 years, and we learn Elle's mother and her grandmother before her experienced divorce, dysfunction, abuse, and adventure. Throughout Elle's childhood, Jonas is her constant. An ugly secret results in tragedy and changes their relationship forever. Or does it? Elle must decide if she stays with her family—the one she created—or leaves it for the man she cannot forget. I confess: I did pass on dinner one night to finish this book, and I did google the ending. Apparently, there is a whole community of people debating what actually took place! Bestseller. Reese Witherspoon pick. In a word: engrossing.

Our nonfiction guru, **JON GRAND**, picks his favorite books of the year!

Biography: *Robert E. Lee: A Life* by Allen C. Guelzo (\$35). It is hard to imagine a more difficult person to write a balanced biography of than Robert E. Lee. He was a patriot. He was a



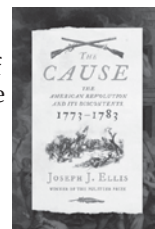
traitor. He was a war hero for action on both the U.S. and Confederate sides. He was a man of honor and a slave owner. It is difficult to balance his crimes and his glory, yet that is what Guelzo does with remarkable skill, giving us a portrait of a man more complex than the tags that attach to his name.



General Nonfiction: *Doom: The Politics of Catastrophe* by Niall Ferguson (\$30). We live in a world that, at any given moment, can overwhelm us with natural or man-made catastrophes. Our ability to respond is a matter of life and death, but as Ferguson argues, our institutions and governmental structures conspire to make our response-capability often too little too late.



American History: *The Cause: The American Revolution and its Discontents, 1773-1783* by Joseph Ellis (\$30). For most of us, what we know of the American Revolution not only obscures the role of the British, but also enshrines much of our national creation mythology. Ellis examines the political and military decisions on both sides to paint a more realistic picture of movement away from conciliation to separation and independence.

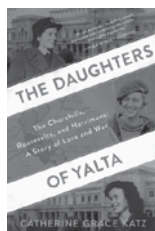


World War II—a tie!

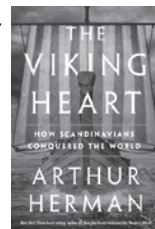
Eight Days in May: The Final Collapse of the Third Reich by Volker Ullrich (\$28.95). On April 30, 1945, Adolph Hitler committed suicide, a grim acknowledgement that the war was over. For the next eight days, the German military and civilian authorities sought ways to manage their surrender to any of the Allies, except Russia. The civilian population drifted in a vacuum, not comprehending their future.



The Daughters of Yalta: The Churchills, Roosevelts, and Harrimans: A Story of Love and War by Catherine Grace Katz (\$18.99, now in paperback). Sarah Churchill, Anna Roosevelt, and Kathleen Harriman were chosen by their fathers to accompany them to the critical conference at Yalta in 1945. Planning for the post-war world, Roosevelt, Churchill, and Harriman would take advantage of their daughters' exceptional political knowledge and instincts, and their unofficial presence as "flies on the wall," to safely and freely evaluate the discussions and proposed decisions.



General History: *The Viking Heart: How Scandinavians Conquered the World* by Arthur Herman (\$30). The Vikings are generally portrayed as sea-faring barbarians who were the scourge of Europe. Their fierce reputation is not totally undeserved. But their societies were more complex than previously described, with settled family life balancing marauding. Herman looks at their voyages and their search for plunder as transformative for the rest of Europe, inspiring others to dare to explore beyond their own locales. The legacies of the Vikings to their own time and to ours link us together.



Science: *Water: A Biography* by Giulio Boccaletti (\$30). Life is impossible without water. The presence or absence of water has defined where and how cultures and societies have emerged. This is a story about the resource, to be sure, but it is also an anthropological look at human social and cultural development—all written in a readable and accessible style.



MELANIE HAUCK



My favorite book of this year is *Great Circle* by Maggie Shipstead (\$28.95). Shortlisted for the 2021 Booker Prize, it is a riveting historical novel about the first women of aviation, the prejudice women face, and the circle of life we all experience. The book is

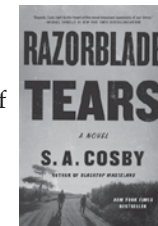


well-written, creative and unique, and broadened my knowledge. The main protagonist, Marian, struggles to become an aviatrix in Montana starting in the 1920s *ala* Amelia Earhart. The story follows her passion and her struggles to learn to fly when women were actively deterred from doing so. Her goal is to be the first person to circumnavigate the world longitudinally, crossing over both the North and South Poles. Through her, we learn about real-life women pilots and the sacrifices they made to pursue their dreams in the sky. Marion's story is interspersed with the modern-day story of Hadley, a Hollywood starlet famous for acting in movies similar to the "Twilight" series. She is fed up with the industry and its double standards for women, and with social media and the frenzy it creates around celebrities. She self-destructs, prompting the film industry to drop her. To redeem herself, she agrees to play Marion in an artsy depiction of Marion's life. Hadley delves into Marion's real-life story, not the dramatized version, and discovers unanticipated parallels and lessons. *Great Circle* has fascinating and well-developed characters, sweeping narratives, and soaring writing. It will entertain you for years to come.

ELIZABETH HUBBARD



Razorblade Tears by S.A. Cosby (\$26.99). Shelved in our store's "mystery" section, this book is so much more. A contemporary tale of two fathers, one Black, one white, both racked with grief over the death of their sons. A story of retribution, vengeance, and possibly redemption. Buddy and Ike face their prejudices about their sons and each other as they set about finding the people who killed their sons. This book is a fast read but will leave you with hope for a humanity in which two men with such disparate backgrounds can find common ground and even friendship. In spite of the difficult circumstances that bring them together, there are warm and even funny moments. You will not regret sticking around to see how this one plays out!



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ROBERT McDONALD



Two Truths and a Lie: A Murder, a Private Investigator, and Her Search for Justice (\$28). Ellen McGarrah was a young reporter assigned to attend an execution.



Jesse Tafao, the man in the electric chair, died a terrible death due to a faulty machine. Haunted by what she had witnessed, and hearing whispers that the wrong man may have been convicted, she embarks on a years-long quest to uncover the truth behind the crime he died for: two policemen brutally killed. In taut and captivating prose, McGarrah has written the best American true crime book since Capote's *In Cold Blood*.

SHARMAN MCGURN



The Lincoln Highway by Amor Towles (\$30) is a soaring, luminous novel filled with unforgettable characters, humanity, humor, and tragedy as well. Taking place over 10 days in 1954, this road-trip coming-of-age story is filled with detours and adventures. Three teenagers have met at a work farm in Kansas for



delinquent boys. Practical Emmett Watson, crafty and sarcastic Duchess, and wealthy but dreamy and unstable Woolly are joined in their escapades by precocious Billy, Emmett's 8-year-old brother. Emmett has been released from the work farm early, and Duchess and Woolly escape in the trunk of the warden's car as he drives Emmett home to Nebraska. With the warden gone, shenanigans begin. Despite their difficult lives, the boys pursue their dreams during the optimistic days of post-World War II America. The Watson brothers have planned to drive to California on the Lincoln Highway to find their mother, who abandoned them long ago. Circumstances interfere. Along with Duchess and Woolly, they head east, not west. The book is rich and layered; events unfold from multiple points of view. Towles is deft at interweaving philosophy, mythology (including a wanderer named Ulysses), and Shakespeare throughout his narrative. He writes beautifully. "In leaving Nebraska, Emmett had little to regret. He didn't regret leaving behind their house or their possessions. He didn't regret having left behind his father's debts or his grave. And when he had driven those first few miles of the Lincoln Highway, he had savored the sensation of putting distance between himself and his hometown, even if he was headed in the wrong direction." Humor infuses the book, too, despite the losses and betrayals the boys have endured. And the powerful ending certainly ensures lively book club discussions. *The Lincoln Highway* is a fine novel, not to be missed.

KATHY RILEY



Harlem Shuffle by Colson Whitehead (\$28.95). After two serious Pulitzer Prize-winning novels, in *Harlem Shuffle*, Whitehead is having some fun while exploring Harlem in the late '50s and early '60s. Ray Carney is a legitimate businessman as owner of Carney's Furniture,

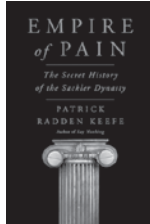


while his cousin Freddie is a hustler. Ray sells new and used furniture, some of which with dubious origins, in the front showroom, while providing a fencing operation in the back office, all the while considering himself an ordinary man. Unfortunately, Freddie cannot avoid trouble or involving Ray. Divided into three sections, it is a crime novel with an intriguing perspective on how both the legal and illegal can be viewed from either side. The first section, in 1959, involves a robbery at the Hotel Theresa, the top hotel in Harlem. The second, in 1961, settles into the exploration of Ray's family and how to attain the apartment on Riverside Drive to which he aspires. The final part is during the 1964 riots in Harlem. As much of the book takes place at night as during the day. Whitehead is constantly contrasting the two sides of each character and situation. Late at night was "when the straight world slept and the bent world got to work". The scenes of Ray roaming the streets, unable to sleep, as he plots revenge for being denied admittance to the Dumas Club, an elite association of Black businessmen, give insight into his determination to succeed in a world of conflicting opportunities. One definition of shuffle is to move things from one position or place to another. Furniture moves, jewelry is stolen and resold, and illusions and ambition are questioned in the authentic humanity of Ray Carney in the very real world of mid-century Harlem.

CHARLOTTE ROBERTSON



Empire of Pain: The Secret History of the Sackler Dynasty by Patrick Radden Keefe (\$32.50) is a masterwork of investigative reporting that reads like a combination of true crime and tragedy. Though so much has been written about the opioid crisis in our country and Purdue



Pharma's role in it, until recently not much was known about the Sackler family outside of their generous donations to cultural and educational institutions worldwide. Three very talented and ambitious brothers, all physicians, from Brooklyn—Arthur, Raymond and Mortimer—saw an opportunity with a tiny company that made earwax treatment and stool

softeners. They leveraged their business through canny and often deceptive advertising into selling tranquilizers in the 1960s, and ended up marketing time-released morphine and finally, time-released oxycodone, which is twice as strong as morphine and equally addictive. In meticulous detail, Patrick Radden Keefe follows the lives of the Sackler brothers from their birth to immigrant parents through their amassing enormous wealth and establishing a family dynasty marketing pharmaceutical products, to their indictment for the deaths of over 200,000 Americans. The story of the Sacklers' rise and fall (not quite: Purdue Pharma declared bankruptcy, and the Sacklers stashed billions of dollars off shore) is enraging, repellent, and absolutely fascinating.

MIKE WYSOCK



Percival Everett's latest novel, *The Trees* (\$16 in paperback), is perhaps the best police procedural I've read in a very long time, but to call it a mystery truly sells the work short. *The Trees* is a scathing indictment of America's failure to atone for its history of racial violence. And so,



something is afoot in the small town of Money, Mississippi—historically significant as the location of Emmett Till's brutal murder and lynching in 1955. The bodies of two local white residents are found murdered and mutilated. Curiously, at the scenes of each crime, local police discover the corpse of the same black man. This corpse also has a habit of completely disappearing from the morgue. As the intrigue grows, Everett introduces his main characters: two detectives from the Mississippi Bureau of Investigation and one detective from the FBI. Leads to various suspects will send this wise-cracking trio to a "cadaver company" in Chicago, a soul food restaurant attached to a mysteriously hidden dojo, and to Mama Z, a 103-year old resident of Money, Mississippi, who has compiled a complete archive of all lynching victims in US history. Told in 108 short chapters, this page-turner is full of dark humor and rough language. As horrific murders begin to spread throughout the country, all with the hallmarks of revenge for past hate crimes, the mysteries take the shape of allegory. Percival Everett is a subversive satirist and has built a career of writing novels and short stories that play with his readers' expectations of genre, trope, and form. In *The Trees*, Everett serves up a deeply thoughtful and timely study of history and racial violence that reads like a phantasmagoric mystery.

JACOB ZAWA



Stranger to the Moon by Evelio Rosero, translated by Anne McLean (\$13.95 in paperback). In this harrowing and metaphorical world, the clothed ones hold dominion over the naked ones. Columbian writer Evelio Rosero's Kafka-esque *Stranger to the Moon* paints a



haunting picture of imprisonment and oppression, subjugation and violence—and, also, of the will to freedom. The naked ones must serve the every need of the clothed ones, and to such an extent that the naked ones rarely question any longer their own servitude. Excepting a single naked one, who remains quietly rebellious (until his quietude is no longer endurable), the naked ones go to the very edges of death (and often beyond death) for the satisfaction of their masters, the clothed ones. It is from this unique naked one's perspective that we learn of the tragic, cruel rituals of this other-worldly realm. In his book, Rosero creates a universe so realized, and so terror-inducing, that the reader cannot help but confront those urgent and profound questions that regard power, authority, agency, and revolution. *Stranger to the Moon* is written with artistry: it is full of symbolism and unfettered social criticism, and its dank claustrophobia can only give way to a mysterious optimism. It is by way of this optimism that the book is lifted to a telling tale of difficult truths concerning certain less approachable aspects of human nature.

Book Stall Staffers Pick Their 2021 Children's Favorites

Happy Holidays! It's been a challenging year, but the Children's Department has been busy! We close out the year having hosted numerous book fairs for local schools and children's author visits. We were also thrilled to bring Jarett Dapier to a Learn charter school where he talked about jazz and his wonderful book *Jazz for Lunch*. Amazing local authors like Lindsey Currie, Carolyn Crimi, and Alex Willan visited small groups of kids in schools. Some school districts banded their schools together to host large virtual events with popular authors like Alan Gratz for his latest, *Ground Zero* about the events around 9/11. We have authors visiting schools in the next couple of months, and if your school might be interested in hosting an author, please let us know! Call Kari Patch or Robert McDonald at the store (847 446-8880).

The winter months are the perfect time to while away the hours curled up with a good book! We have so many wonderful new titles on our shelves for every child in your life and expert booksellers (Betsy, Kari, and Amy) to help you make the perfect selection. And as Dr. Seuss observed, "The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more you learn, the more places you'll go."

KARI PATCH



My favorite picture book: *A Shelter for Sadness* by Anne Booth, illustrated by David Litchfield (\$17.99).

Sadness has come to live with me and I am building it a shelter. I am building a shelter for my sadness and welcoming it inside.

A poignant and heart-warming picture book exploring the importance of making space and time for our own griefs, small or large, with lovely illustrations from David Litchfield. If ever there was a year for learning to make space for sadness, both quiet and loud, this was it.



Graphic novels (a tie): *Garlic & the Vampire* by Bree Paulsen (\$12.99). Garlic lives a peaceful life in the garden of kindly Witch Agnes with her best friend Carrot and the other vegetables. But when the village learns that a vampire has moved into the castle nearby, who will save them from the vampire's legions of minions waiting to execute his plan to take over the world with darkness?! Garlic! That's who. With humor, heart, and lots of courage, Garlic is about to have the adventure of her life.



Tidesong by Wendy Xu (\$12.99). This lovely graphic novel is perfect for fans of the *Tea Dragon Society* books. It's full of heart and magic, and I loved it. Sophie comes from a family of witches, but she isn't great at magic. In hopes she can learn more in time to apply to the best magic academy, she's sent to visit her cousin Sage and Auntie Lan. When Sophie feels that she isn't learning fast enough, she attempts a spell on her own and accidentally intertwines her magic with a young dragon. Trying to fix her mistake will teach Sophie that the only things harder than magic are friendship and families.



BETSY BALLYEAT

Pony by R.J. Palacio (\$17.99). Twelve-year-old Silas is awakened late one night by the sounds of men talking to his father. He can not recognize the men, but they seem dangerous. They put his father on a horse and prepare to take him away with them, and the last thing Silas's father says to him is to stay home and wait for his return. The next morning a pony with strange markings



arrives and Silas recognizes it as having been with the kidnappers the night before. Silas decides the pony will be able to lead him on his journey to find his father. With his faithful ghost companion, Mittenwool, Silas begins his journey. He meets a federal marshal, who is

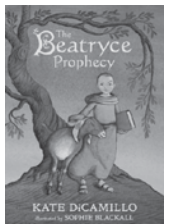
tracking the outlaws and allows Silas to join him. As they travel through a mysterious forest, Silas realizes he is able to hear the ghosts of the Native Americans who were slaughtered during the westward expansion. Author Palacio weaves a web of relationships and connections that we understand and feel before we can explain them. We know Mittenwool has stayed with Silas to guide and love him, but we are not sure why, until the author shows us one hidden strand that ties them together. This is a story of love, loss, and connections that bind us to each other. Pony shows readers how to choose love and show courage. *Ages 10 up*



AMY TROGDON



The Beatryce Prophecy by Kate DiCamillo, illustrated by Sophie Blackall (\$19.99). This year we were blessed with many middle grade fiction titles I felt worthy of being my "favorite"! I loved *Frankie & Bug*, *Pony*, *Willowdeen*, *Second-hand Dogs*, and *Once upon a*



Camel. It was a very good year, but Kate DiCamillo is always a winner in my book! Set "during a time of war when terrible things happen everywhere," this medieval fairy-tale-like story tells of young Beatryce. She is found sick and dirty at a monastery by Brother Edik, holding tight to the ear of a goat. The goat, Answelica, is mean and ornery to the monks but seems to be strangely protective of Beatryce. While he is nursing her back to health, Edik discovers her terrible secret...one that puts them all in danger. The combination of Newbery winner Kate DiCamillo's story-telling and Caldecott winner Sophie Blackall's black and white artwork culminates in a compassionate tale, full of kindness, friendship, hope, and joy. A must-read! *Ages 8-12*

Chez Bob by Bob Shea (\$17.99).

One of my favorite picture books this year! Others would be *Gladys the Magic Pig*, *It Fell from the Sky*, *Lala's Words*, *The Nightwalk*, and *Yours in Books*. Bob Shea, loved for his sense of humor and bright, lively artwork, has long been a favorite author of mine. *Chez Bob* by Bob Shea (you are already giggling, right?) is the story of a bright yellow Alligator, who is very lazy. "Maybe if I ask nicely, a bird will fly into my mouth and down to my belly." When that doesn't happen, Bob decides to open a birdseed restaurant on his nose! He could even franchise it, making so much money, he could have gold teeth and a solid-gold hat! But to Bob's surprise, Chez Bob becomes so popular the town is built around the restaurant, and Bob, now a small business owner, is a respected member of the community. He even coaches a Little League avian team! By the time he can finally eat one of the birds, he finds his relationship with them has changed! My school was lucky to enough to have a Zoom visit with Mr. Shea, and I am happy to report he is just as delightful in person as are his books! *Ages 4-8*



THURSDAY, JANUARY 6

6:30 – 7:30 pm, A Virtual program

ALICE MOODY and ANN WALTERS

New Books for a New Year

Alice Moody and Ann Walters host their annual tribute to books recommended for the new year! These two outstanding book group facilitators will share a brand new list of books! Note: this event usually fills up quickly. Look for the sign-up page on our website in a few weeks—and join us!

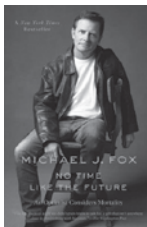
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 7

6 pm, A Virtual program

MICHAEL J. FOX

No Time Like the Future

We celebrate the paperback release of actor and advocate Michael Fox's account of resilience, hope, fear and mortality, and how these things resonate in our lives. He will be in conversation with television personality Willie Geist. This is the only event Michael is doing for the paperback. Visit our website for details.



TUESDAY, JANUARY 11

6:30 pm, A Virtual program

JOHN MACLEAN

Home Waters: A Chronicle of a Family and a River



In the spirit of his father's *A River Runs Through It*, John Maclean discusses the power of place to shape families. It is a meditation on fly fishing and life along Montana's Blackfoot River, where four

generations of Macleans have fished, bonded, and drawn timeless lessons from its storied waters. Maclean talks about the book with our Jon Grand.



SUNDAY, JANUARY 23 and MONDAY, JANUARY 24

Book Stall Inventory Days

The Book Stall takes its annual inventory in January. Please note that we will close on Sunday, January 23, at 3 pm. On Monday, January 24, we will be closed all day.

Family Action Network (FAN) Events

All FAN events are virtual. The programs are free and open to the public, but registration is required. For more information, go to familyactionnetwork.net.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 2

7 pm

ELISA SPUNGEON BILDNER and ROBERT BILDNER

"Farm-to-Table: Growers, Chefs, and Home Cooks"

The Bildners' book, *The Berkshires Farm Table Cookbook: 125 Homegrown Recipes from the Hills of New England*, is a tribute to the dedicated family farmers and farm-to-table chefs throughout the region, which includes western Massachusetts as well as neighboring Columbia County and Hudson Valley in New York and southern Vermont. The two will be interviewed by Sarah Stegner, co-chef and co-owner of Prairie Grass Café in Northbrook.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 7

7 pm

DANIEL LIBERMAN, PhD

Exercised: Why Something We Never Evolved to Do Is Healthy and Rewarding

Dr. Lieberman, professor of biological sciences and human evolutionary biology at Harvard University, writes about how we can make exercise more enjoyable, rather than shaming and blaming people for avoiding it. He also tackles the question of whether you can exercise too much, even as he explains why exercise can reduce our vulnerability to the diseases most likely to make us sick and kill us. He will be interviewed by Gretchen Reynolds, who writes the "Phys Ed" column for *The New York Times* and the "Well" column for the paper's Sunday magazine.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 9

7 pm

ROBERT FRANK, PhD

Under the Influence: Putting Peer Pressure to Work

Dr. Frank's book offers fascinating information about the contagion effect—how a single incident can influence the choices, decisions, and behavior of others. He also has a focus on the issue of climate change and how we can make individual choices that benefit everyone. He is professor of management and economics at Cornell University's Johnson Graduate School of Management.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 14

7 pm

CLAUDIA GOLDIN, PhD

Career and Family:

Women's Century-Long Journey Toward Equity

Dr. Goldin traces how generations of women have responded to the problem of balancing career and family as the 20th century experienced a sea change in gender equality, revealing why true equity for dual career couples remains frustratingly out of reach. FAN feels the book is especially important, given the impact that the pandemic has had on women in the workforce. Dr. Goldin is a professor of economics at Harvard University. She will be interviewed by Dr. David Figlio, Dean of the School of Education and Social Policy at Northwestern.



Gift of Books—All Year Long

More ideas for holiday shopping:

- Our **Children's and Adult Gift Book Clubs**: You can select the frequency (every month, every other month, or four times a year) and the type of book you prefer.
- Our **Discount Club** membership for \$15 allows a 10% discount on all purchases for a year, plus our monthly newsletter mailed to your recipient's home.

For more information, see our website thebookstall.com (click on the "Subscription" link).



Virtual Book Discussion Groups via The Book Stall

Wednesday, December 1, Morning Discussion at 9:30 am
The Midnight Library by Matt Haig. Led by Ann Walters

Wednesday, December 8, Morning Discussion at 9:30 am
Intimacies by Katie Kitamura. Led by Nancy Buehler

Wednesday, December 8, Evening Discussion at 6:30 pm
Daughters of Yalta—The Churchills, Roosevelts, and Harrimans: A Story of Love and War (out in paperback Oct. 19)
 by Catherine Grace Katz. Led by Jon Grand

These virtual book discussion groups are free to attend,
 but registration is required.

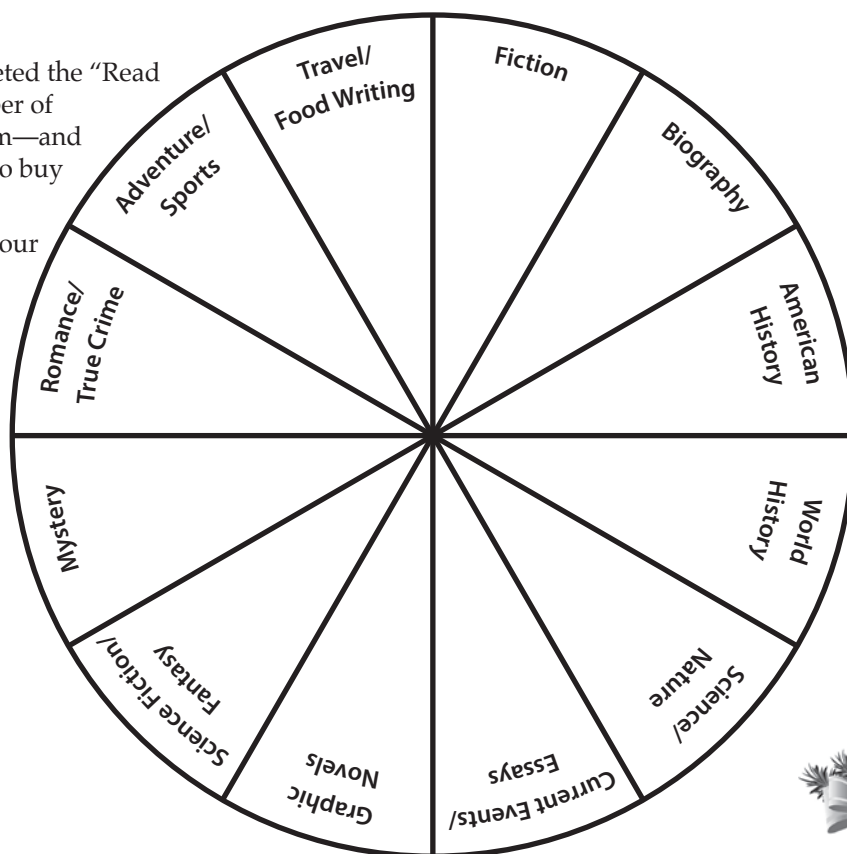
Please email Robert at events@thebookstall.com.



Use Our "Read Around the Book Stall" for Your Holiday Shopping!

Congratulations to our readers who have completed the "Read Around the Book Stall." We've had a great number of responses from customers who filled out the form—and we are now continuing it. We challenge readers to buy one title from each of the sections in our store.

Return your completed sheet (accompanied by your Book Stall sales receipts) indicating you have bought books from 10 of the 12 sections, and receive a \$20 gift card plus a free one-year discount club membership or free renewal. Return by December 1, 2022.





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- For our Annual 20% Off Sale, we are open from 9 am - 6 pm on Saturday, December 4 and from 9 am - 5 pm on Sunday, December 6.
- The Book Stall closes at 3 pm on Christmas Eve, December 24, and on New Year's Eve, December 31. We are closed on Christmas Day and New Year's Day.
- We close to take our inventory on Sunday, January 23 at 3 pm and will be closed all day Monday, January 24.

New Year, New You

Joyful: The Surprising Power of Ordinary Things to Create Extraordinary Happiness
by Ingrid Fetell Lee (\$18.99 in paperback)

The Book of Hope: A Survival Guide for Trying Times by Jane Goodall and Douglas Abrams (\$28)

The Comfort Book by Matt Haig (\$22)

The Blue Zone Challenge: A 4-Week Plan for a Longer, Better Life by Dan Buettner (\$19.99)

Atlas of the Heart: Managing Meaningful Connection and the Language of Human Experience
by Brené Brown (\$30)

Rationality: What It Is, Why It Seems Scarce, Why It Matters by Steven Pinker (\$32)

The American Experiment: Dialogues on a Dream by David M. Rubenstein (\$32)

Think Again: The Power of Knowing What You Don't Know by Adam Grant (\$28)

The End of Bias: A Beginning—The Science and Practice of Overcoming Unconscious Bias
by Jessica Nordell (\$28.99)

The Extended Mind: The Power of Thinking Outside the Brain by Annie Murphy Paul (\$28)

How to Be Fearless: In 7 Simple Steps by Jessica Hagy (\$16.95)

100 Things We've Lost to the Internet by Pamela Paul (\$27)

Lonely Planet's Best in Travel 2022 by Lonely Planet (\$17.99)

Graceland, at Last: Notes on Hope and Heartache from the American South by Margret Renkl (\$26)

Everybody: A Book About Freedom by Olivia Lang (\$26.95)

Mobituaries: Great Lives Worth Reliving by Mo Rocca (\$20 in paperback)

Saving Us: A Climate Scientist's Case for Hope and Healing in a Divided World by Katharine Hayhoe (\$27)

Zen and the Art of Saving the Planet by Thich Nhat Hanh (\$27.99)

Together: Memorable Meals Made Easy by Jamie Oliver (\$35)

More Mediterranean: 225+ New Plant-Forward Recipes, Endless Inspiration for Eating Well by America's Test Kitchen (\$34.99)

Milk Street Instant Pot: Bold, Fast, Fresh—a Revolution of Flavor in an Instant by Christopher Kimball (\$19.99)

