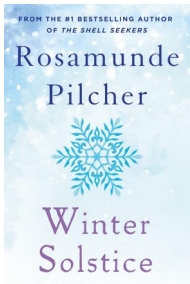


2024 -Noon Book Club Selections



Hruska Memorial
Public Library



January 29th, Winter Solstice. Written by Rosamunde Pilcher. Fiction-1. (NLC-16, HMPL-1.)-Nov. 27-Jan.29, 2024.

Elfrida Phipps, once of London's stage, moved to the English village of Dibton in hopes of making a new life for herself. Gradually she settled into the comfortable familiarity of village life—shopkeepers knowing her tastes, neighbors calling her by name—still she finds herself lonely.

Oscar Blundell gave up his life as a musician in order to marry Gloria. They have a beautiful daughter, Francesca, and it is only because of their little girl that Oscar views his sacrificed career as worthwhile.

Carrie returns from Austria at the end of an ill-fated affair with a married man to find her mother and sister sharing a home and squabbling endlessly. With Christmas approaching, Carrie agrees to look after her sister's awkward and quiet teenage daughter, Lucy, so that her mother might enjoy a romantic fling in America.

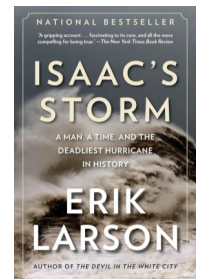
Sam Howard is trying to pull his life back together after his wife has left him for another. He is without home and without roots, all he has is his job. Business takes him to northern Scotland, where he falls in love with the lush, craggy landscape and set his sights on a house.

It is the strange rippling effects of a tragedy that will bring these five characters together in a large, neglected estate house near the Scottish fishing town of Creagan.

Rating: ___ Thoughts:

February 26th, Isaac's Storm. Written by Erik Larson. Non-Fiction-1. (NLC-4, HMPL-8, 7+1.) Jan. 22-March 4, 2024.

From the bestselling author of *The Devil in the White City*, here is the true story of the deadliest hurricane in history. National Bestseller

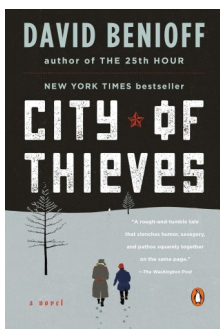


September 8, 1900, began innocently in the seaside town of Galveston, Texas. Even Isaac Cline, resident meteorologist for the U.S. Weather Bureau failed to grasp the true meaning of the strange deep-sea swells and peculiar winds that greeted the city that morning. Mere hours later, Galveston found itself submerged in a monster hurricane that completely destroyed the town and killed over six thousand people in what remains the greatest natural disaster in American history--and Isaac Cline found himself the victim of a devastating personal tragedy.

Using Cline's own telegrams, letters, and reports, the testimony of scores of survivors, and our latest understanding of the science of hurricanes, Erik Larson builds a chronicle of one man's heroic struggle and fatal miscalculation in the face of a storm of unimaginable magnitude. Riveting, powerful, and unbearably suspenseful, *Isaac's Storm* is the story of what can happen when human arrogance meets the great uncontrollable force of nature.

Rating: ___ Thoughts:

March 25th, City of Thieves. Written by David Benioff Fiction-2. (HMPL-11+1)



From the critically acclaimed author of *The 25th Hour* and *When the Nines Roll Over* and co-creator of the HBO series *Game of Thrones*, a captivating novel about war, courage, survival — and a remarkable friendship that ripples across a lifetime.

During the Nazis' brutal siege of Leningrad, Lev Beniov is arrested for looting and thrown into the same cell as a handsome deserter named Kolya. Instead of being executed, Lev and Kolya are given a shot at saving their own lives by complying with an outrageous directive: secure a dozen eggs for a powerful Soviet colonel to use in his daughter's wedding cake. In a city cut off from all supplies and suffering unbelievable deprivation, Lev and Kolya embark on a hunt through the dire lawlessness of Leningrad and behind enemy lines to find the impossible.

*By turns insightful and funny, thrilling and terrifying, the New York Times bestseller *City of Thieves* is a gripping, cinematic World War II adventure and an intimate coming-of-age story with an utterly contemporary feel for how boys become men.*

Rating:- ___

Thoughts:

**April 29th, All Creatures Great and Small. Written by James Herriot.
Non-Fiction-2. (NLC-15. HMPL-1.) March 18-May 6, 2024.**

The classic multimillion copy bestseller

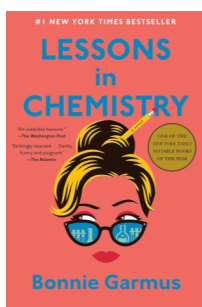
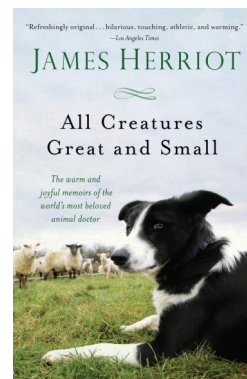
Delve into the magical, unforgettable world of James Herriot, the world's most beloved veterinarian, and his menagerie of heartwarming, funny, and tragic animal patients.

For over forty years, generations of readers have thrilled to Herriot's marvelous tales, deep love of life, and extraordinary storytelling abilities. For decades, Herriot roamed the remote, beautiful Yorkshire Dales, treating every patient that came his way from smallest to largest, and observing animals and humans alike with his keen, loving eye.

In *All Creatures Great and Small*, we meet the young Herriot as he takes up his calling and discovers that the realities of veterinary practice in rural Yorkshire are very different from the sterile setting of veterinary school. Some visits are heart-wrenchingly difficult, such as one to an old man in the village whose very ill dog is his only friend and companion, some are lighthearted and fun, such as Herriot's periodic visits to the overfed and pampered Pekinese Tricky Woo who throws parties and has his own stationery, and yet others are inspirational and enlightening, such as Herriot's recollections of poor farmers who will scrape their meager earnings together to be able to get proper care for their working animals. From seeing to his patients in the depths of winter on the remotest homesteads to dealing with uncooperative owners and critically ill animals, Herriot discovers the wondrous variety and never-ending challenges of veterinary practice as his humor, compassion, and love of the animal world shine forth.

James Herriot's memoirs have sold 80 million copies worldwide, and continue to delight and entertain readers of all ages.

Rating: ____ Thoughts:



**May 20, Lessons in Chemistry. Written by Bonnie Garmus.
-Fiction-3. (Central Plains Library System-10. HMPL-1.)**

#1 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER • GMA BOOK CLUB PICK • Meet Elizabeth Zott: “a gifted research chemist, absurdly self-assured and immune to social convention” (*The Washington Post*) in 1960s California whose career takes a detour when she becomes the unlikely star of a beloved TV cooking show. • APPLE TV+ SERIES COMING LATER THIS YEAR

This novel is “irresistible, satisfying and full of fuel” (*The New York Times Book Review*) and “witty, sometimes hilarious...the *Catch-22* of early feminism” (Stephen King, via Twitter).

A BEST BOOK OF THE YEAR: *The New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *NPR*, *Oprah Daily*, *Entertainment Weekly*, *Newsweek*

Chemist Elizabeth Zott is not your average woman. In fact, Elizabeth Zott would be the first to point out that there is no such thing as an average woman. But it's the early 1960s and her all-male team at Hastings Research Institute takes a very unscientific view of equality. Except for one: Calvin Evans; the lonely, brilliant, Nobel-prize nominated grudge-holder who falls in love with—of all things—her mind. True chemistry results.

But like science, life is unpredictable. Which is why a few years later Elizabeth Zott finds herself not only a single mother, but the reluctant star of America's most beloved cooking show *Supper at Six*. Elizabeth's unusual approach to cooking (“combine one tablespoon acetic acid with a pinch of sodium chloride”) proves revolutionary. But as her following grows, not everyone is happy. Because as it turns out, Elizabeth Zott isn't just teaching women to cook. She's daring them to change the status quo.

Laugh-out-loud funny, shrewdly observant, and studded with a dazzling cast of supporting characters, *Lessons in Chemistry* is as original and vibrant as its protagonist.

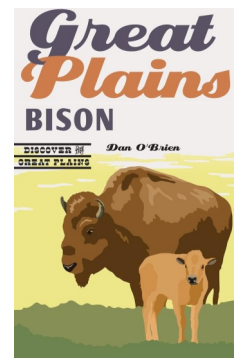
Rating: ____ Thoughts:

**June 24th, Great Plains Bison. Written by Dan O'Brien.
Non-Fiction-3. (NLC-15. HMPL-1.) May 13-July 1st, 2024.**

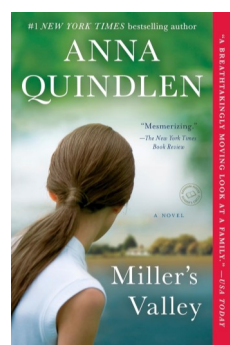
A Project of the Center for Great Plains Studies and the School of Natural Resources, University of Nebraska

Great Plains Bison traces the history and ecology of this American symbol from the origins of the great herds that once dominated the prairie to its near extinction in the late nineteenth century and the subsequent efforts to restore the bison population.

A longtime wildlife biologist and one of the most powerful literary voices on the Great Plains, Dan O'Brien has managed his own ethically run buffalo ranch since 1997. Drawing on both extensive research and decades of personal experience, he details not only the natural history of the bison but also its prominent symbolism in Native American culture and its rise as an icon of the Great Plains. *Great Plains Bison* is a tribute to the bison's essential place at the heart of the North American prairie and its ability to inspire naturalists and wildlife advocates in the fight to preserve American biodiversity.



Rating: ___ Thoughts:



**July 29th, Miller's Valley. Written by Anna Quindlen.
Fiction-4. (NLC-9 + 1 Audio. HMPL-1.) June 17th-Aug. 7th, 2024.**

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER • In a small town on the verge of big change, a young woman unearths deep secrets about her family and unexpected truths about herself. Filled with insights that are the hallmark of Anna Quindlen's bestsellers, *Miller's Valley* is an emotionally powerful story about a family you will never forget.

For generations the Millers have lived in Miller's Valley. Mimi Miller tells about her life with intimacy and honesty. As Mimi eavesdrops on her parents and quietly observes the people around her, she discovers more and more about the toxicity of family secrets, the dangers of gossip, the flaws of marriage, the inequalities of friendship and the risks of passion, loyalty, and love. Home, as Mimi begins to realize, can be "a place where it's just as easy to feel lost as it is to feel content."

Miller's Valley is a masterly study of family, memory, loss, and, ultimately, discovery, of finding true identity and a new vision of home. As Mimi says, "No one ever leaves the town where they grew up, even if they go." *Miller's Valley* reminds us that the place where you grew up can disappear, and the people in it too, but all will live on in your heart forever.

Rating: ___ Thoughts:

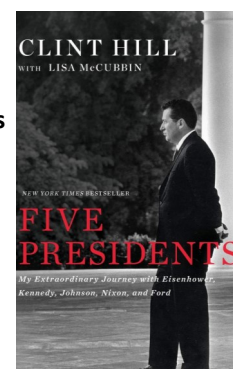
**August 26th, Five Presidents. My Extraordinary Journey with Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson, Nixon, and Ford. Written by Clint Hill. Non-Fiction-4.
(HMPL-10+1.)**

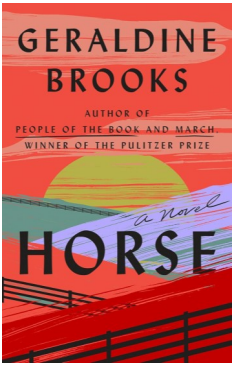
The #1 *New York Times* bestselling author of *Mrs. Kennedy and Me* and *Five Days in November* reflects on his seventeen years on the Secret Service for presidents Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson, Nixon, and Ford.

The assassination of one president, the resignation of another, and the swearing-in of the two who followed those traumatic events. Clint Hill was there, on duty, through *Five Presidents*.

After an extraordinary career as a Special Agent on the White House Detail, Clint Hill retired in 1975. His career spanned the administrations of Dwight D. Eisenhower, John F. Kennedy, Lyndon B. Johnson, Richard M. Nixon, and Gerald R. Ford. A witness to some of the most pivotal moments in the twentieth century, Hill lets you walk in his shoes alongside the most powerful men in the world during tumultuous times in America's history—the Cold War; the Cuban Missile Crisis; the assassinations of President John F. Kennedy, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Robert F. Kennedy; the Vietnam War; Watergate; and the resignations of Vice President Spiro Agnew and President Nixon.

It was indeed a turbulent time—and through it all, Clint Hill had a unique insider perspective. His fascinating stories will shed new light on the character and personality of each of these five presidents, as Hill witnesses their human sides in the face of grave decisions. **Rating: ___ Thoughts:**





September 30th, Horse. Written by Geraldine Brooks. Fiction-5. (HMPL-11+1.)

Kentucky, 1850. An enslaved groom named Jarret and a bay foal forge a bond of understanding that will carry the horse to record-setting victories across the South. When the nation erupts in civil war, an itinerant young artist who has made his name on paintings of the racehorse takes up arms for the Union. On a perilous night, he reunites with the stallion and his groom, very far from the glamor of any racetrack.

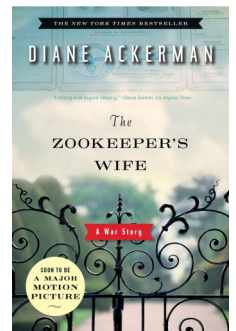
New York City, 1954. Martha Jackson, a gallery owner celebrated for taking risks on edgy contemporary painters, becomes obsessed with a nineteenth-century equestrian oil painting of mysterious provenance.

Washington, DC, 2019. Jess, a Smithsonian scientist from Australia, and Theo, a Nigerian-American art historian, find themselves unexpectedly connected through their shared interest in the horse—one studying the stallion’s bones for clues to his power and endurance, the other uncovering the lost history of the unsung Black horsemen who were critical to his racing success.

Based on the remarkable true story of the record-breaking thoroughbred Lexington, Horse is a novel of art and science, love and obsession, and our unfinished reckoning with racism.

Rating: ___ Thoughts:

October 28th, The Zookeeper’s Wife. Written by Diane Ackerman. Non-Fiction-5. (NLC-12. HMPL-1.) September 18-November 6th, 2024. The New York Times bestseller now a major motion picture starring Jessica Chastain.



A true story in which the keepers of the Warsaw Zoo saved hundreds of people from Nazi hands.

Jan and Antonina Zabinski were Polish Christian zookeepers horrified by Nazi racism, who managed to save over three hundred people. Yet their story has fallen between the seams of history. Drawing on Antonina’s diary and other historical sources, best-selling naturalist Diane Ackerman vividly re-creates Antonina’s life as “the zookeeper’s wife,” responsible for her own family, the zoo animals, and their “Guests”—Resistance activists and refugee Jews, many of whom Jan had smuggled from the Warsaw Ghetto. Ironically, the empty zoo cages helped to hide scores of doomed people, who were code-named after the animals whose names they occupied. Others hid in the nooks and crannies of the house itself.

Jan led a cell of saboteurs, and the Zabinskis’ young son risked his life carrying food to the Guests, while also tending an eccentric array of creatures in the house. With hidden people having animal names, and pet animals having human names, it’s small wonder the zoo’s codename became “The House Under a Crazy Star.”

Yet there is more to this story than a colorful cast. With her exquisite sensitivity to the natural world, Diane Ackerman explores the role of nature in both kindness and savagery, and she unravels the fascinating and disturbing obsession at the core of Nazism: both a worship of nature and its violation, as humans sought to control the genome of the entire planet.

Rating: ___ Thoughts:



November 25th, Blind Date with a Book. Wrap up a copy of your favorite book to share with one of the other Book Club members. Bring it to the October Book Club meeting and we will discuss your “blind date” in November.

Books Suggested by Other Members:
