

What we are reading.....

My book discussion group just finished "**Boy in the Striped Pajamas**", which is a young adult book about the holocaust, concentration camps. Very interesting--told from viewpoint of 9 year old. My granddaughter will read it before they visit the holocaust museum this summer. Will start some very interesting conversations with youth about that period in history! Very somber ending, hear the movie follows the contents of the book pretty well!
Jane Hilton, Director, Elwood Public Library

Just finished "**Born on a Blue Day**" for our reading group.
Pam Soreide, Library Director, Holdrege Area Public Library

Right now I'm reading "**Truck: A Love Story**" by Wisconsin author Michael Perry. A humorous story of small town Wisconsin. "From the publisher: "All I wanted to do," says Michael Perry, "was get my old pickup truck running. That, and plant a little vegetable garden. Then I got distracted by this woman..." Perry reminds me of Garrison Keillor.
Sr. M. Francesca,
Hastings St. Michael's

I just read "**House Rules**" by Jodi Picoult. This is now the third book that I've read of hers and find that I almost can't read them fast enough. ~
Tysha Francis, Director, Fairfield Public Library

I just finished reading "**The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks**" by Rebecca Skloot. I am not normally a lover of nonfiction, but it was riveting. I am going to give you the first two paragraphs in the book's Prologue:

"There's a photo on my wall of a woman I've never met, its left corner torn and patched together with tape. She looks straight into the camera and smiles, hands on hips, dress suit neatly pressed, lips painted deep red. It's the late 1940s and she hasn't yet reached the age of thirty. Her light brown skin is smooth, her eyes still young and playful, oblivious to the tumor growing inside her—a tumor that would leave her five children motherless and change the future of medicine. Beneath the photo, a caption says her name is 'Henrietta Lacks, Helen Lane or Helen Larson.'

No one knows who took that picture, but it's appeared hundreds of times in magazines and science textbooks, on blogs and laboratory walls. She's usually identified as Helen Lane, but often she has no name at all. She's simply called HeLa, the code name given to the world's first immortal human cells—her cells, cut from her cervix just months before she died."

Susan Franklin, Hastings College

I just finished "**The Graveyard Book**" by Gaiman. June Stratman, School Librarian, Wilcox-Hildreth Public

I'm reading "**Everything I Need to Know I Learned from a Children's Book**", edited by Anita Silvey. Notable people tell what their favorite children's book was/is...now I've been rereading some old classics and finding some new ones too!!
It's been fun!!
Nancy Sherwood, Director, Auld Public Library, Red Cloud

Hastings Public Library Staff:

"**I am Ozzy**" by Ozzy Osbourne.....Dana Still

"**Wallander**" by Henning Mankell.....Shelia Nelson

“*The Big Short*” by Michael LewisElizabeth Hajny
“*#3 in the Cedar Cove Series*” by Debbie Macomber..... Linda Gardner
“*Love in the Time of Cholera*” by Gabriel Garcia MarquezBeverly Whitsel

What we are reading.....continued from page 8

Sherry’s comment“When I put out the call for books we are reading, I never dreamed we would have such a great response. Obviously, we all want to tell each other about books we are reading...even if just in a couple of sentences. Perhaps we can make this a newsletter feature. I think it is really interesting that no one is reading the same book. We are diverse!”

I just finished “**Mennonite in a Little Black Dress: A Memoir of Going Home**” by Rhoda Janzen. It’s funny, thoughtful and sometimes challenging. It had me laughing out loud and thinking “Amen, sister!” in the first chapter.

Cindy Gitt, Children’s Librarian, Holdrege Area Public

Library

“**Making Rounds with Oscar: The Extraordinary Gift of an Ordinary Cat**” by David Dosa, M.D.

Oscar is one of six cats who are residents of a nursing home in Rhode Island. He possesses an extraordinary gift: he knows instinctively when the end of life is near. He lives on the floor where terminal dementia patients reside, and he is always snuggled up next to them during their last hours. His love and companionship provide comfort for the patients and their family members.

Kathy Schultz, Children’s Librarian, Hastings Public Library

I’m finally finishing James Michener’s “**Alaska.**” Getting through the ice age and the forming of the continents was a real trek, but the Alcan Highway is completed and now WWII is ending. Now if we can just save the salmon!

Sherry Block, Hastings Regional Center

I am absolutely hooked on the author Charles Todd. A commissioner at one of the conventions where NLC had a booth told me his name, and I bought book #1 called *A Test of Wills*, checked out #2 *Wings of Fire* from Hastings Public Library. I had to buy book #3 *Search the Dark*, and it is just as good as the first two. Charles Todd is actually a mother-son team who write mysteries set England in the aftermath of WW I. There are currently 12 books in the series.

Sherry, RVLS

Well. . . I am listening to “**Daemon**” by Daniel Suarez, an audio book about the prospect of an Artificial Intelligence taking over the internet and committing murders after the death of its creator. I am enjoying the premise of the plot but the narration by two readers suffers from their inability to differentiate between the large cast of characters.

I just finished reading “**Wicked**”/Gregory Maguire for our local book circle. We discussed it last night to VERY mixed reviews. Only two readers finished the book (myself included) and I must admit no other reader would recommend it. I had seen the stage production of *Wicked* in Omaha and heard the raves about the book from grand-daughters so I was more favorably inclined. Reading it as a parable/fable as well as a novel gives you the opportunity to appreciate the book in more than one way; however it is not full of sunshine and light. Don't expect happy endings on the yellow brick road.

I am also reading Malcolm Gladwell's collection of essays “**What the Dog Saw**”. Just Started it but after two of the essays I know I am going to enjoy the rest of the book. He is an observer that looks at the world from a not skewed viewpoint, but certainly gives the opportunity to see things differently. The first piece is about the rise of the “pitchmen” and how they morphed into informercials and the Popiel empire.

Judy Grandstaff, Director, Blue Hill Public Library

I'm reading **WHY MY THIRD HUSBAND WILL BE A DOG: The Amazing Adventures of an Ordinary Woman** by Lisa Scottoline. quote from her website: "Together in one collection are Lisa's wildly popular *Philadelphia Inquirer* columns that show the humorous side of life, from a woman's perspective. Filled with seventy charming and hilarious vignettes, it's trademark Scottoline."

I've enjoyed reading her book series that revolve around murders and dangerous situations for the women of an all women law firm. Several years back, I participated in an online book discussion through Barnes and Noble University. It was great fun when Lisa, herself, voiced her agreement with one of my comments. This latest book is interesting and entertaining and I like the short stories for when I don't have much time to read.

Terri Johnson, North Platte Public Library

I just finished reading **Brava, Valentine** by Adriana Trigiani and it was excellent. It is the second of a trilogy she is writing with these characters. Trigiani is great at writing characters and it is funny, lighthearted, and heartwarming. It is a perfect book for pulling you out of the winter doldrums and (hopefully) welcome springtime! I just started reading **Wolf Hall** by Hillary Mantel which is pretty much the opposite kind of literature, following Thomas Cromwell in the time of Henry VIII. The verdict is still out on that one...

Robin Quinn, Director, Hastings Memorial Library, Grant

I had a Read Aloud Nebraska party here at the Red Cloud High School 2 weeks ago. We had a big spread in the Red Cloud Chief, (local paper) and I need to send in pictures and video to the Read Aloud NEbraska people yet. It was great!

Janice Hartman, School Librarian, Red Cloud Public Schools

Two books recently read by our book discussion group that were popular are "**The Help**" by Kathryn Stockett and "**Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society**" by Mary Ann Shaffer and Annie Barrows. "The Help" revolves around the lives and unique friendships of three women - Aibileen, Minny and Skeeter - in Mississippi in the early 1960's. In the book we are given a look at black and white interaction in a small town in the south. "The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society" is written as a series of letters from Guernsey Islanders to an author living in London just after World War II. Although the style may be confusing at first because there are so many characters and letters, it is truly amazing how the author is able to sustain the characterizations so that real personalities are revealed in the letters. We can hear each characters voice and perspective. After reading the book, most of the book club has placed the Channel Islands high on their list of "places to visit someday" especially after viewing pictures of the islands on the books website! You can find out more about these great reads on readinggroupguides.com.

LaDonna Schluterbusch, Director, Hoesch Memorial Library, Alma

What kids are reading

Once Upon a Cool Motorcycle Dude by Kevin O'Malley

Diary of a Wimpy Kid (any and all volumes) by Jeff Kinney **Mr. Putter and Tabby** by Cynthia

Rylant **Magic Tree House** series by Mary Pope Osborne **Mr. Sunny is Funny** (any book from the

series: **My Weird School Daze**) by Dan Gutman **Skippyjon Jones in Mummy Trouble** AND in the

Doghouse by Judy Schachner **The Song that Never Ends** (or any in the **SpongeBob SquarePants**

ready-to-read series) **What is a Wookiee?** / **Watch out for Jabba the Hutt!** / **Luke Skywalker's**

amazing story (Star Wars series and DK Reader series) **Mr. Rush and Little Miss Splendid** by

Roger Hargreaves -- the series seems to be revived with the television show; any book in the series.

Ivy and Bean (any) by Annie Barrows

Meet Julie (any) by Megan McDonald

and don't forget the Golden Sower nominees and past winners. These are just a few of the books that are never on the shelf for long before they are snatched up again.

Linda Wood, McCook Elementary School

Lost Time by Susan Maupin Schmid

This is an intriguing fantasy/science fiction story of twelve year-old Violynne Vivant, whose parents had disappeared a year ago while on an archaeology dig site, where they were searching for an ancient city of a race of creatures called the Croon. The Croon no longer live on the planet. No one knows how the Croon mysteriously vanished or where they went.

Her home is broken into and a violin is missing.

Then the ruler of the planet, the Arbiter, wants Violyenne to go to the government run boarding school. Her Aunt Madelyn doesn't want this and makes plans to have Violyenne go to a safe place. Her aunt enlists the aid of a secretive and unsettling being called the Coil.

Aunt Madelyn is arrested. Violyenne escapes and meets a Croon, who gives her a pearl like object that pulses with energy.

Violyenne and her "butler," Einhart, whose technological skills are very helpful, decide to go to the dig site to try to find out what happened to her parents and to try to escape from the clutches of the Arbiter, the Coil and the Croon. There is an exciting and surprising climax to the story. Middle school age sci-fi/fantasy readers will enjoy this story.

Claudette Wielechowski, Middle School Library Media Specialist, North Platte, NE.